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Wilson sc.

MISS HEARD as AURELIA.

— And I like him for his affection to my young person.

W



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(2.)

THE
TWIN RIVALS.

A
COMEDY,

By Mr. GEORGE FARQUHAR.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,
By Permission of the Manager.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

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M DCC XCV.



TO
HENRY BRETT, Esq.

THE Commons of England have a right of petitioning; and since, by your place in the senate, you are obliged to hear and redress the subject, I presume upon the privilege of the people, to give you the following trouble.

As prologues introduce plays on the stage, so dedications usher them into the great theatre of the world; and as we chose some staunch actor to address the audience, so we pitch upon some gentleman of undisputed ingenuity to recommend us to the reader. Books, like metals, require to be stamped with some valuable effigies before they become popular and current.

To escape the critics, I resolved to take sanctuary with one of the best; one who differs from the fraternity in this, that his good-nature is ever predominant; can discover an author's smallest faults, and pardon the greatest.

Your generous approbation, sir, has done this play service, but has injured the author; for it has made him insufferably vain, and he thinks himself authorised to stand up for the merit of his performance, when so great a master of wit has declared in his favour.

The muses are the most coquetish of their sex, fond of being admired, and always putting on their best airs to the finest gentleman ; but, alas, sir! their addresses are stale, and their fine things but repetition ; for there is nothing new in wit, but what is found in your own conversation.

Could I write by the help of study, as you talk without it, I would venture to say something in the usual strain of dedication ; but as you have too much wit to suffer it, I too little to undertake it, I hope the world will excuse my deficiency, and you will pardon the presumption of,

Sir,

Your most obliged, and

Most humble servant,

Dec. 23, 1702.

G. FARQUHAR.

PREFACE.

THE success and countenance that debauchery has met with in plays, was the most severe and reasonable charge against their authors in Mr. Collier's Short View; and indeed this gentleman had done the drama considerable service, had he arraigned the stage only to punish its misdemeanors, and not to take away its life. But there is an advantage to be made sometimes of the advice of an enemy, and the only way to disappoint his designs, is to improve upon his invectives, and to make the stage flourish, by the virtue of that satire by which he thought to suppress it.

I have, therefore, in this piece, endeavoured to shew, that an English comedy may answer the strictness of poetical justice: but indeed the greater share of the English audience (I mean that part which is no farther read than in plays of their own language) have imbibed other principles, and stand up as vigorously for the old poetic licence, as they do for the liberty of the subject. They take all innovations for grievances; and let a project be never so well laid for their advantage, yet the undertaker is very likely to suffer by it. A play without a beau, cully, cuckold, or coquet, is as poor an entertainment to some palates, as their Sunday's dinner would be without beef and pudding. And this I take to be one reason that the galleries were so thin during the run of this play. I thought indeed to have soothed the splenetic zeal of the city, making a gentleman a knave, and punishing their great grievance--a whoremaster: but a certain virtuoso of that fraternity has told me since, that the citizens were never more disappointed in any entertainment; for (said he) however

pious we may appear to be at home, yet we never go to that end of the town but with an intention to be lewd.

There was an odium cast upon this play, before it appeared, by some persons who thought it their interest to have it suppressed. The ladies were frighted from seeing it, by formidable stories of a midwife, and were told, no doubt, that they must expect no less than a labour upon the stage; but I hope the examining into that aspersion will be enough to wipe it off, since the character of the midwife is only so far touched as is necessary for carrying on the plot, she being principally decyphered in her procuring capacity; and I dare not affront the ladies so far, as to imagine they could be offended at the exposing of a bawd.

Some critics complain, that the design is defective for want of Clelia's appearance in the scene; but I had rather they should find this fault, than I forfeit my regard to the fair, by shewing a lady of figure under a misfortune; for which reason I only made her nominal, and chose to expose the person that injured her. And if the ladies don't agree that I have done her justice in the end, I am very sorry for it.

Some people are apt to say, that the character of Richmore points at a particular person; though I must confess, I see nothing but what is very general in his character, except his marrying his own mistress; which by the way he never did, for he was no sooner off the stage, but he changed his mind, and the poor lady is still in *statu quo*: but upon the whole matter 'tis application only makes the ass; and characters in plays, are like Long-lane clothes, not hung out for the use of any particular person, but to be bought by only those they happen to fit.

The most material objection against this play is the im-

portance of the subject, which necessarily leads into sentiments too great for diversion, and supposes vices too great for comedy to punish. 'Tis said, I must own, that the business of comedy is chiefly to ridicule folly, and that the punishment of vice falls rather into the province of tragedy; but if there be a middle sort of wickedness, too high for the sock, and too low for the buskin, is there any reason that it should go unpunished? What are more obnoxious to humane society, than the villains exposed in this play, the frauds, plots and contrivances upon the fortunes of men, and the virtue of women? But the persons are too mean for heroic; then what must we do with them? Why, they must of necessity drop into comedy: for 'tis unreasonable to imagine that the law-givers in poetry would tie themselves up from executing that justice which is the foundation of their constitution; or to say, that exposing vice is the business of the drama, and yet make rules to screen it from persecution.

Some have asked the question, why the elder Wou'dbe, in the fourth act, should counterfeit madness in his confinement? Do n't mistake; there was no such thing in his head; and the judicious could easily perceive that it was only a start of humour put on to divert his melancholy; and when gaiety is strained to cover misfortune, it may very naturally be overdone, and rise to a semblance of madness, sufficient to impose on the constable, and perhaps on some of the audience; who taking every thing at sight, impute that as a fault, which I am bold to stand up for, as one of the most masterly strokes of the whole piece.

This I think sufficient to obviate what objections I have heard made; but there was no great occasion for making this defence, having had the opinion of some of the greatest persons in England, both for quality and parts, that the play

has merit enough to hide more faults than have been found ; and I think their approbation sufficient to excuse some pride that may be incident to the author upon this performance.

I must own myself obliged to Mr. Longueville for some lines in the part of Teague, and something of the lawyer ; but above all, for his hint of the Twins, upon which I formed my plot : but having paid him all due satisfaction and acknowledgment, I must do myself the justice to believe, that few of our modern writers have been less beholden to foreign assistance in their plays, than I have been in the following scenes.

PROLOGUE.

By Mr. MOTTEUX. [An alarm sounded.]

*WITH drums and trumpets in this warring age,
A martial prologue should alarm the stage.
New plays—e'er acted, a full audience near,
Seem towns invested, when a siege they fear.
Prologues are like a forlorn hope sent out
Before the play, to skirmish and to scout:
Our dreadful foes, the critics, when they spy,
They cock, they charge, they fire—then back they fly.
The siege is laid—their gallant chiefs abound,
Here—foes intrench'd, there—glittering troops around,
And the loud batt'ries roar—from yonder rising ground.
In the first act, brisk sallies, (miss or hit)
With volleys of small shot, or snip-snap wit,
Attack, and gall the trenches of the pit.
The next—the fire continues, but at length
Grows less, and slackens like a bridegroom's strength.
The third, feints, mines, and countermines abound,
Your critic engineers, safe under-ground,
Blow up our works, and all our art confound.
The fourth—brings on most action, and 'tis sharp,
Fresh foes crowd on, at your remissness carp,
And desp'rate, tho' unskill'd, insult our counter-scarp.*

Then comes the last; the gen'ral storm is near,
The poet-governor now quakes for fear;
Runs wildly up and down, forgets to bluff,
And would give all he's plunder'd—to get off.
So—Don, and Monsieur—Bluff, before the siege,
Were quickly tam'd—at Venlo, and at Liege:
'Twas *Viva Spagnia! Vive France!* before;
Now, *Quartier: Monsieur! Quartier! Ah! Senor!*
But what your resolution can withstand?
You master all, and owe the sea and land.
In war—your valour makes the strong submit;
Your judgment humbles all attempts in wit.
What play, what fort, what beauty can endure
All fierce assaults, and always be secure!
Then grant 'em gen'rous terms who dare to write,
Since now—that seems as desp'rate as to fight:
If we must yield—yet e'er the day be fix'd,
Let us hold out the third—and, if we may, the sixth.

Dramatis Personæ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

ELDER WOU'DEE,	-	-	Mr. Wroughton.
YOUNG WOU'DEE,	-	-	Mr. Lee Lewes.
RICHMORE,	-	-	Mr. Whitfield.
TRUEMAN,	-	-	Mr. Lewis.
SUBTLEMAN,	-	-	Mr. Wewitzer.
BALDERDASH, an Alderman,	-	-	Mr. Booth.
CLEAR-ACCOUNT, a Steward,	-	-	Mr. Lestrangle.
FAIREANK, a Goldsmith,	-	-	Mr. Fearon.
TEAGUE,	-	-	Mr. Egan.

Women.

CONSTANCE,	-	-	Mrs. Jackson.
AURELIA,	-	-	Mrs. Bulkley.
MIDNIGHT,	-	-	Mrs. Pitt.
Steward's Wife,	-	-	Mrs. Poussin.

Constables, Watch, &c.

SCENE, London.



THE
TWIN RIVALS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Lodgings. The Curtain drawn up, discovers Young Wou'dbe dressing, and his Valet buckling his shoes.

Young Wou'dbe.

THERE is such a plague every morning with buckling shoes, gartering, combing, and powdering——Pshaw! cease thy impertinence, I'll dress no more to-day.——Were I an honest brute that rises from his litter, shakes himself, and so is drest, I could bear it.

Enter RICHMORE.

Rich. No farther yet, Wou'dbe! 'T is almost one.

Y. W. Then blame the clock-makers, they made it so——Pr'ythee, what have we to do with time?——Can't we let it alone as nature made it? Can't a man eat when he's hungry, go to bed when he's sleepy, rise when he wakes, dress when he pleases, without the confinement of hours to enslave him?

Rich. Pardon me, sir, I understand your stoicism
—You have lost your money last night.

Y. W. No, no, fortune took care of me there—
I had none to lose.

Rich. 'Tis that gives you the spleen.

Y. W. Yes, I have got the spleen and something
“ else—Heark'e—

Rich. How!

[*Whispers.*

Y. W. Positively. The lady's kind reception
“ was the most severe usage I ever met with.—Sha'n't
“ I break her windows, Richmore?

Rich. A mighty revenge, truly. Let me tell you,
“ friend, that breaking the windows of such houses
“ are no more than writing over a vintner's door as
“ they do in Holland—*Vin te koop*. 'Tis no more
“ than a bush to the tavern, a decoy to the trade,
“ and to draw in customers: but, upon the whole
“ matter, I think a gentleman should put up an af-
“ front got in such little company; for the pleasure,
“ the pain, and the resentment, are all alike, scanda-
“ lous.

Y. W. Have you forgot, Richmore, how I found
“ you one morning with the Flying-Post in your
“ hand, hunting for physical advertisements?

Rich. That was in the days of dad, my friend,
“ in the days of dirty linen, pit-masks, hedge-ta-
“ verns, and beef steaks: but now I fly at nobler
“ game, the Ring, the Court, Paulet's, and the
“ Park. I despise all women that I apprehend any
“ danger from, less than the having my throat cut;

" and should scruple to converse even with a lady
" of fortune, unless her virtue were loud enough to
" give me pride in exposing it. Here 's a letter I re-
" ceived this morning; you may read it.

" [*Gives a letter.*]

" Y. W. [*Reads.*]

" If there be solemnity in protestation, justice in
" Heaven, or fidelity on earth, I may still depend on
" the faith of my Richmore. Though I may conceal
" my love, I no longer can hide the effects on't from
" the world——Be careful of my honour, remember
" your vows, and fly to the relief of the disconsolate

" CLELIA.

" The fair, the courted, blooming Clelia!

" *Rich.* The credulous, troublesome, foolish Cle-
" lia. Did you ever read such a fulsome harangue?
" —Lord, sir, I am near my time, and want your as-
" sistance.——Does the silly creature imagine that
" any man would come near her in those circumstan-
" ces, unless it were doctor Chamberlain——You
" may keep the letter.

" Y. W. But why would you trust it with me?—
" You know I can't keep a secret that has any scandal
" in 't.

" *Rich.* For that reason I communicate it. I know
" thou art a perfect Gazette, and will spread the news
" all over the town: for you must understand that I
" am now besieging another; and I would have the
" fame of my conquest upon the wing, that the town
" may surrender the sooner.

"Y. W. But if the report of your cruelty goes along with that of your valour, you'll find no gar-
"rison of any strength will open their gates to you.

"Rich. No, no, women are cowards, the terror pre-
"vails upon them more than clemency: my best pre-
"tence to my success with the fair, is my using them
"ill; 'tis turning their own guns upon them, and I
"have always found it the most successful battery to
"assail one reputation by sacrificing another.

"Y. W. I could love thee for thy mischief, did I
"not envy thee for thy success in it."

Rich. You never attempt a woman of figure.

Y. W. How can I? This confounded hump of mine is such a burden to my back, that it presses me down here in the dirt and diseases of Covent-Garden, the low suburbs of pleasure—Curst fortune! I am a younger brother, and yet cruelly deprived of my birth-right, a handsome person; seven thousand a year in a direct line, would have straightened my back to some purpose—But I look, in my present circumstances, like a branch of another kind, grafted only upon the stock, which makes me grow so crooked.

Rich. Come, come, 'tis no misfortune, your father is so as well as you.

Y. W. Then why should not I be a lord as well as he? Had I the same title to the deformity, I could bear it.

Rich. But how does my Lord bear the absence of your twin-brother?

Y. W. My twin-brother? Ay, 't was his crowding

me that spoiled my shape, and his coming half an hour before me that ruined my fortune. My father expelled me his house some two years ago, because I would have persuaded him that my twin-brother was a bastard. He gave me my portion, which was about fifteen hundred pounds, and I have spent two thousand of it already. As for my brother, he don't care a farthing for me.

Rich. Why so, pray?

Y. W. A very odd reason—Because I hate him.

Rich. How should he know that?

Y. W. Because he thinks it reasonable it should be so.

Rich. But did your actions ever express any malice to him?

Y. W. Yes: I would fain have kept him company; but being aware of my kindness, he went abroad. He has travelled these five years, and I am told, is a grave, sober fellow, and in danger of living a great while: all my hope is, that when he gets into his honour and estate, the nobility will soon kill him by drinking him up to his dignity. But come, Frank, I have but two eye-sores in the world, a brother before me, and a hump behind me, and thou art still laying them in my way: let us assume an argument of less severity. Can'st thou lend me a brace of hundred pounds?

Rich. What would you do with them?

Y. W. Do with them! There's a question indeed—Do you think I would eat them.

Rich. Yes, o' my troth would you, and drink them together. Look 'e, Mr. Wou'dbe, whilst you kept

well with your father, I could have ventured to have lent you five guineas. But as the case stands, I can assure you, I have lately paid off my sister's fortune, and——

Y. W. Sir, this put-off looks like an affront, when you know I do n't use to take such things.

Rich. Sir, your demand is rather an affront, when you know I do n't use to give such things.

Y. W. Sir, I'll pawn my honour.

Rich. That's mortgaged already for more than it is worth; you had better pawn your sword there 't will bring you forty shillings.

Y. W. 'Sdeath, sir—— [*Takes his sword off the table.*]

Rich. Hold, Mr. Wou'dbe——suppose I put an end to your misfortunes all at once.

Y. W. How, sir?

Rich. Why, go to a magistrate, and swear you would have robbed me of two hundred pounds.——“Look'e
“sir, you have been often told, that your extravagance would some time or other be the ruin of
“you; and it will go a great way in your indictment,
“to have turned the pad upon your friend.”

Y. W. This usage is the height of ingratitude from you, in whose company I have spent my fortune.

Rich. I'm therefore a witness, that it was very ill spent—Why would you keep company, be at equal expences with me that have fifty times your estate? What was gallantry in me, was prodigality in you: mine was my health, because I could pay for it; yours a disease, because you could not.

Y. W. And is this all I must expect from our friendship?

Rich. Friendship! Sir, there can be no such thing without an equality.

Y. W. That is, there can be no such thing when there is occasion for 't.

Rich. Right, sir——our friendship was over a bottle only; and whilst you can pay your club of friendship, I'm that way your humble servant; but when once you come borrowing, I'm this way——your humble servant. [Exit.

Y. W. Rich, big, proud, arrogant villain! I have been twice his second, thrice sick of the same love, and thrice cured by the same physic, and now he drops me for a trifle——That an honest fellow in his cups should be such a rogue when he is sober!——The narrow-hearted rascal has been drinking coffee this morning. Well, thou dear solitary half-crown, adieu!——Here, Jack, take this, pay for a bottle of wine, and bid Balderdash bring it himself. [Exit Serv.] How melancholy are my poor breeches; not one chink!——Thou art a villanous hand, for thou hast picked my pocket.——This vintner now has all the marks of an honest fellow, a broad face, a copious look, a strutting belly, and a jolly mien. I have brought him above three pounds a night for these two years successively. The rogue has money, I'm sure, if he would but lend it.

Enter BALDERDASH, with a bottle and glass.

Oh, Mr. Balderdash, good morrow.

Bald. Noble Mr. Wou'dbe, I'm your most humble servant. I have brought you a whetting-glass, the best Old Hock in Europe ; I know 'tis your drink in a morning.

Y. W. I'll pledge you, Mr. Balderdash.

Bald. Your health, sir.

[*Drinks.*]

Y. W. Pray, Mr. Balderdash, tell me one thing, but first sit down : now tell me plainly what you think of me ?

Bald. Think of you, sir ! I think that you are the honestest, noblest gentleman, that ever drank a glass of wine ; and the best customer that ever came into my house.

Y. W. And do you really think as you speak ?

Bald. May this wine be my poison, sir, if I do n't speak from the bottom of my heart.

[*Drinks.*]

Y. W. And how much money do you think I have spent in your house ?

Bald. Why, truly, sir, by a moderate computation, I do believe, that I have handled of your money, the best part of five hundred pounds within these two years.

Y. W. Very well ! And do you think that you lie under any obligation for the trade I have promoted to your advantage ?

Bald. Yes, sir ; and if I can serve you in any respect, pray command me to the utmost of my ability.

Y. W. Well ! thanks to my stars, there is still some honesty in wine. Mr. Balderdash, I embrace you and your kindness : I am at present a little low in cash, and must beg you to lend me a hundred pieces,

Bald. Why truly, Mr. Wou'dbe, I was afraid it would come to this; I have had it in my head several times to caution you upon your expences: but you were so very genteel in my house, and your liberality became you so very well, that I was unwilling to say any thing that might check your disposition; but truly, sir, I can forbear no longer to tell you, that you have been a little too extravagant.

Y. W. But since you reaped the benefit of my extravagance, you will, I hope, consider my necessity.

Bald. Consider your necessity! I do with all my heart; and must tell you, moreover, that I will be no longer accessory to it: I desire you, sir, to frequent my house no more.

Y. W. How, sir!

Bald. I say, sir, that I have an honour for my good lord your father, and will not suffer his son to run into any inconvenience: Sir, I shall order my drawers not to serve you with a drop of wine. Would you have me connive at a gentleman's destruction?

Y. W. But methinks, sir, that a person of your nice conscience should have cautioned me before.

Bald. Alas! sir, it was none of my business: would you have me be saucy to a gentleman that was my best customer? Lack-a-day, sir, had you money to hold it out still, I had been hanged rather than be rude to you—But truly, sir, when a man is ruined, 'tis but the duty of a Christian to tell him of it.

Y. W. Will you lend me money, sir?

Bald. Will you pay me this bill, sir?

Y. W. Lend me the hundred pound, and I'll pay the bill.——

Bald. Pay me the bill, and I will——not lend you the hundred pound, sir.——But [pray consider with yourself, now, sir; would not you think me an errant coxcomb, to trust a person with money that has always been so extravagant under my eye? whose profuseness I have seen, I have felt, I have handled? Have not I known you, sir, throw away ten pounds a-night upon a covey of pit-partridges, and a setting-dog? Sir, you have made my house an ill house: my very chairs will bear you no longer.—In short, sir, I desire you to frequent the Crown no more, sir.

Y. W. Thou sophisticated ton of iniquity: have I fattened your carcass, and swelled your bags with my vital blood? Have I made you my companion to be thus saucy to me? But now I will keep you at your due distance.

[Kicks him.

Ser. Welcome, sir!

[Kicks him.

Y. W. Well said, Jack.

[Kicks him again.

Ser. Very welcome, sir! I hope we shall have your company another time. Welcome, sir!

[He is kicked off.

Y. W. Pray wait on him down stairs, and give him a welcome at the door too. [Exit Serv.] This is the punishment of hell; the very devil that tempted me to sin, now upbraids me with the crime. I have villainously murdered my fortune, and now its ghost, in the lank shape of poverty, haunts me. Is there no charm to conjure down the fiend?

Re-enter Servant.

Ser. Oh, sir! here's sad news.

Y. W. Then keep it to thyself, I have enough of that already.

Ser. Sir, you will hear it too soon.

Y. W. What! is Broad below?

Ser. No, no, sir; better twenty such as he were hanged. Sir, your father's dead.

Y. W. My father!—Good night, my lord. Has he left me any thing?

Ser. I heard nothing of that, sir.

Y. W. Then I believe you heard all there was of it. Let me see—my father dead, and my elder brother abroad—If Necessity be the mother of Invention, she was never more pregnant than with me, [*Pauses.*] Here, sirrah, run to Mrs. Midnight, and bid her come hither presently. [*Exit Servant.*] That woman was my mother's midwife when I was born, and has been my bawd these ten years. I have had her endeavours to corrupt my brother's mistress; and now her assistance will be necessary to cheat him of his estate; for she's famous for understanding the right-side of a woman, and the wrong side of the law. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Changes to Midnight's House. Enter MIDNIGHT and Maid.

Mid. Who's there?

Maid. Madam.

Mid. Has any message been left for me to day?

Maid. Yes, madam; here has been one from my Lady Stillborn, that desired you not to be out of the way, for she expected to cry out every minute.

Mid. How! every minute!—Let me see—[*Takes out her pocket-book.*] Stillborn—Ay, she reckons with her husband from the first of April; and with Sir James from the first of March.—Ay, she 's always a month before her time. [*Knocking at the door.*] Go see who 's at the door.

Maid. Yes, madam.

[*Exit Maid.*]

Mid. Well! certainly there is not a woman in the world so willing to oblige mankind as myself; and really I have been so ever since the age of twelve, as I can remember. "I have delivered as many women of great bellies, and helped as many to them as any person in England;" but my watching and cares have broken me quite, I am not the same woman I was forty years ago.

Enter RICHMORE.

Oh, Mr. Richmore! you 're a sad man, a barbarous man, so you are. What will become of poor Clelia, Mr. Richmore? The poor creature is so big with her misfortunes, that they are not to be borne. [*Weeps.*]

Rich. You, Mrs. Midnight, are the fittest person in the world to ease her of them.

Mid. And won't you marry her, Mr. Richmore?

Rich. My conscience won't allow it; for I have sworn since to marry another.

Mid. And will you break your vows to Clelia?

Rich. Why not, when she has broke her's to me?

Mid. How 's that, sir?

Rich. Why she swore a hundred times never to grant me the favour, and yet, you know, she broke her word.

Mid. But she lov'd, Mr. Richmore, and that was the reason she forgot her oath.

Rich. And I love Mr. Richmore, and that is the reason I forgot mine. "Why should she be angry that I follow her own example, by doing the very same thing from the very same motive?"

Mid. Well, well! take my word, you'll never thrive. "I wonder how you can have the face to come near me, that am the witness of your horrid oaths and imprecations! Are not you afraid that the guilty chamber above-stairs should fall down upon your head? Yes, yes, I was accessory, I was so!—but if ever you involve my honour in such a villainy the second time—Ah, poor Clelia! I loved her as I did my own daughter—you seducing man."
[Weeps.]

Rich. Heigho, my Aurelia.

Mid. Hey, ho! she's very pretty.

Rich. Dost thou know her, my dear Midnight?

"*Mid.* Hey, ho! she's very pretty. Ah, you're a sad man. Poor Clelia was handsome, but indeed, breeding, paking, and longing, has broken her much. 'Tis a hard case, Mr. Richmore, for a young lady to see a thousand things, and long for

" a thousand things, and yet not dare to own she
" longs for one. She had like to have miscarried the
" other day for the pith of a loin of veal. Ah, you
" barbarous man!

" *Rich.* But my Aurelia! confirm me that you
" know her, and I'll adore you."

Mid. You would fling five hundred guineas at my head, that you knew as much of her as I do. Why, sir, I brought her into the world; I have had her sprawling in my lap. Ah! she was as plump as a puffin, sir.

Rich. I think she has no great portion to value herself upon; her reputation only will keep up the market. We must first make that cheap, by crying it down, and then she'll part with it at an easy rate.

Mid. But won't you provide for poor Clelia?

Rich. Provide! why ha'n't I taught her a trade?—Let her set up when she will, I'll engage her customers enough, because I can answer for the goodness of her ware.

Mid. Nay, but you ought to set her up with credit, and take a shop; that is, get her a husband. Have you no pretty gentleman, your relation now, that wants a young virtuous lady with a handsome fortune? No young Templar that has spent his estate in the study of the law, and starves by the practice? No spruce officer that wants a handsome wife to make court for him among the major-generals? Have you none of these, sir?

" *Rich.* Pho, pho, madam—you have tired me

" upon that subject. Do you think a lady that gave
 " me so much trouble before possession, shall ever
 " give me any after it? No, no; had she been more
 " obliging to me when I was in her power, I should
 " be more civil to her now she 's in mine: my assi-
 " duity before-hand was an over price; had she made
 " a merit of the matter, she should have yielded
 " sooner.

" *Mid.* Nay, nay, sir; though you have no regard
 " for her honour, yet you shall protect mine: how
 " d'ye think I have secured my reputation so long
 " among the people of the best figure, but by keep-
 " ing all mouths stopped? Sir, I'll have no clamours
 " at me. Heavens help me, I have clamours enough
 " at my door, early and late, in my t'other capacity.
 " In short, sir, a husband for Clelia, or I banish you
 " my presence for ever.

" *Rich.* Thou art a necessary devil, and I can't
 " want thee. [*Aside.*]

" *Mid.* Look'e, sir, 't is your own advantage; 't is
 " only making over your estate into the hands of a
 " trustee; and though you don't absolutely command
 " the premisses, yet you may exact enough out of
 " them for necessities, when you will."

Rich. Patience a little, madam! I have a young
 nephew that is a captain of horse; he mortgaged the
 last morsel of his estate to me, to make up his equi-
 page for the last campaign. Perhaps you know him;
 he's a brisk fellow, much about court, Capt. Trueman.

Mid. Trueman! Ads my life, he's one of my ba-

bies ;——I can tell you the very minute he was born——precisely at three o'clock, next St. George's day, Trueman will be two and twenty ; "a stripling," the prettiest good-natured child, and your nephew!—He must be the man, and shall be the man ; I have a kindness for him.

Rich. But we must have a care ; the fellow wants neither sense nor courage.

Mid. Phu, phu ! never fear her part, she sha'n't want instructions ; and then for her lying-in a little abruptly, 'tis my business to reconcile matters there, a fright or a fall excuses that : lard, sir, I do these things every day.

Rich. 'T is a pity then to put you out of your road ; and Clelia shall have a husband.

Mid. Spoke like a man of honour. And now I'll serve you again. This Aurelia, you say——

Rich. O, she distracts me ! her beauty, family, and virtue, make her a noble pleasure.

Mid. And you have a mind, for that reason, to get her a husband.

Rich. Yes, faith : I have another young relation at Cambridge, he's just going into orders ; and I think such a fine woman, with fifteen hundred pounds, is a better presentation than any living in my gift ; and why should he like the cure the worse, that an incumbent was there before ?

Mid. Thou art a pretty fellow. At the same moment you would persuade me that you love a woman to madness, you are contriving how to part with her ?

Rich. If I loved her not to madness, I should not run into these contradictions. Here, my dear mother, Aurelia's the word—— [*Offering her money.*]

Mid. Pardon me, sir; [*Refusing the money.*] did you ever know me mercenary? No, no, sir; virtue is its own reward.

Rich. Nay, but madam, I owe you for the teeth-powder you sent me.

Mid. O, that's another matter, sir; [*Takes the money.*] I hope you like it, sir.

Rich. Extremely, madam. But it was somewhat dear of twenty guineas. [*Aside.*]

Enter Servant.

Ser. Madam, here is Mr. Wou'dbe's footman below, with a message from his master.

Mid. I come to him presently. Do you know that Wou'dbe loves Aurelia's cousin and companion, Mrs. Constance, with the great fortune, and that I solicit for him?

Rich. Why, she's engaged to his elder brother:—besides, Young Wou'dbe has no money to prosecute an affair of such consequence. You can have no hopes of success there, I'm sure.

Mid. Truly, I have no great hopes; but an industrious body, you know, would do any thing rather than be idle. The aunt is very near her time, and I have access to the family when I please.

Rich. Now I think on't; pr'ythee get the letter from Wou'dbe that I gave him just now; it would be

proper to our designs upon Trueman, that it should not be exposed.

Mid. And you shewed Clelia's letter to Wou'dbe?

Rich. Yes.

Mid. Eh, you barbarous man.—Who the devil would oblige you?—What pleasure can you take in exposing the poor creature? Dear little child, 't is pity, indeed it is.

Rich. Madam, the messenger waits below; so I'll take my leave. [Exit.]

Mid. Ah, you're a sad man! [Exit.]

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Park. Enter CONSTANCE and AURELIA.

Aurelia.

PR'YTHEE, cousin Constance, be chearful: let the dead lord sleep in peace, and look up to the living;—take pen, ink, and paper, and write immediately to your lover, that he is now a baron of England, and you long to be a baroness.

Con. Nay, Aurelia, there is some regard due to the memory of the father, for the respect I bear the son; besides, I don't know how I could wish my young lord were at home at this juncture: this brother of his——Some mischief will happen——I had a very ugly dream last night——In short, I am eaten up with the spleen.

Aur. Come, come, walk about and divert it; the air will do you good; think of other people's affairs a little. When did you see Clelia?

Con. I'm glad you mentioned her; don't you observe her gaiety to be much more forced than formerly, her humour do n't sit easy upon her.

Aur. No, nor her stays neither, I can assure you.

Con. Did you observe how she devoured the pomegranates yesterday?

Aur. She talks of visiting a relation in Leicestershire.

Con. She fainted away in the country-dance t'other night.

Aur. Richmore shunned her in the walk last week.

Con. And his footman laughed.

Aur. She takes Laudanum to make her sleep a nights.

Con. Ah, poor Clelia! What will she do, cousin?

Aur. Do! Why nothing till the nine months be up.

Con. That's cruel, Aurelia; how can you make merry with her misfortunes? I am positive she was not an easy conquest; some singular villany has been practised upon her.

Aur. Yes, yes, the fellow would be practising upon me too, I thank him.

Con. Have a care, cousin, he has a promising person.

Aur. Nay, for that matter, his promising person may as soon be broke as his promising vows; "Nature, indeed, has made him a giant, and he wars with heaven like the giants of old."

Con. Then why will you admit his visits?

Aur. I never did. But all the servants are more his than our own : he has a golden key to every door in the house : besides, he makes my uncle believe that his intentions are honourable ; and indeed he has said nothing yet to disprove it. But, cousin, do you see who comes yonder, sliding along the Mall?

Con. Captain Trueman ! I protest the campaign has improved him ; he makes a very clean well-finished figure.

Aur. Youthful, easy, and good-natured. I could wish he would know us.

Con. Are you sure he's well-bred?

Aur. I tell you he's good-natured ; and I take good manners to be nothing but a natural desire to be easy and agreeable to whatever conversation we fall into ; and a porter with this is mannerly in his way ; and a duke without it has but the breeding of a dancing-master.

Con. I like him for his affection to my young lord.

Aur. And I like him for his affection to my young person.

Con. How, how, cousin ! You never told me that?

Aur. How should I ? He never told it me, but I have discovered it by a great many signs and tokens, that are better security for his heart than ten thousand vows and promises.

Con. He's Richmore's nephew.

Aur. Ah ! would he were his heir too. He's a pretty fellow—but then he's a soldier, and must share

his time with his mistress, Honour, in Flanders. No, no, I am resolved against a man that disappears all the summer like a woodcock.

As these words are spoken, TRUEMAN enters behind them, as passing over the stage.

True. That 's for me, whoever spoke it. Aurelia!
[*Surprized. The Ladies turn about.*]

Con. What, captain, you 're afraid of every thing but the enemy.

True. I have reason, ladies, to be most apprehensive where there is most danger : the enemy is satisfied with a leg or an arm, but here I am in hazard of losing my heart.

Aur. None in the world, sir ; nobody here designs to attack it.

True. But suppose it be assaulted, and taken already, madam ?

Aur. Then we 'll return it without ransom.

True. But suppose, madam, the prisoner choose to stay where it is.

Aur. That were to turn deserter ; and you know, captain, what such deserve.

True. The punishment it undergoes this moment,
——shot to death——

Con. Nay, then, 'tis time for me to put in.—Pray, sir, have you heard the news of my Lord Wou'dbe's death ?

True. People mind not the death of others, madam, that are expiring themselves. [*To Constance.*] Do you

consider, madam, the penalty of wounding a man in the park? [To Aurelia.

Aur. "Hey-day! Why, captain, d'ye intend to make a Vigo business of it, and break the boom at once?" Sir, if you only rally, pray let my cousin have her share; or if you would be particular, pray be more respectful? not so much upon the declaration, I beseech you, sir.

True. I have been, fair creature, a perfect coward in my passion; I have had hard strugglings with my fear before I durst engage, and now, perhaps, behave far too desperately.

Aur. Sir, I am very sorry you have said so much; for I must punish you for 't, though it be contrary to my inclinations. Come, cousin, will you walk?

Con. Servant, sir. [Exeunt Ladies.

True. Charming creature! 'I must punish you for 't, though it be contrary to my inclination.' Hope and despair in a breath. But I'll think the best. [Exit.

SCENE II.

Changes to Young Wou'dbe's Lodgings. Young WOU'DBE and MIDNIGHT meeting.

Y. W. Thou life and soul of secret dealings, welcome.

Mid. My dear child, bless thee—Who would have imagined that I brought this great rogue into the

world? He makes me an old woman, I protest—But adso, my child, I forgot; I'm sorry for the loss of your father, sorry at my heart, poor man. [*Weeps.*] Mr. Wou'dbe, have you got a drop of brandy in your closet? I an't very well to day.

Y. W. That you sha'n't want: but be pleased to sit, my dear mother. Here, Jack, the brandy bottle.—Now, madam, I have occasion to use you in dressing up a handsome cheat for me.

Mid. I defy any chamber-maid in England to do it better. I have dressed up a hundred and fifty cheats in my time.

Enter JACK, with the brandy-bottle.

Here, boy, this glass is too big, carry it away, I'll take a sup out of the bottle.

Y. W. Right, madam, and my business being very urgent—In three words, 't is this—

Mid. Hold, sir, till I take advice of my council.— [*Drinks.*] There is nothing more comfortable to a poor creature, and fitter to revive wasting spirits, than a little plain brandy. I an't for your hot spirits, your Rosa Solis, your Ratifia's, your orange-waters, and the like—A moderate glass of cool Nantes is the best thing.

Y. W. But to our business, madam—My father is dead, and I have a mind to inherit his estate.

Mid. You put the case very well.

Y. W. One of two things I must choose—either to be a lord or a beggar.

Mid. Be a lord to choose—Though I have known some that have chosen both.

Y. W. I have a brother that I love very well; but since one of us must want, I had rather he should starve than I.

Mid. Upon my conscience, dear heart, you're in the right on 't.

Y. W. Now your advice upon these heads.

Mid. They be matters of weight, and I must consider. [*Drinks.*] Is there a will in the case?

Y. W. There is; which excludes me from every foot of the estate.

Mid. That 's bad—Where 's your brother?

Y. W. He's now in Germany, on his way to England, and is expected very soon.

Mid. How soon?

Y. W. In a month, or less.

Mid. Oh, oh! A month is a great while! Our business must be done in an hour or two—We must suppose your brother to be dead; nay, he shall be actually dead—and, my lord, my humble service t' ye.

[*Drinks.*]

Y. W. O, madam, I'm your ladyship's most devoted. Make your words good, and I'll——

Mid. Say no more, sir; you shall have it, you shall have it.

Y. W. Ay, but how, dear Mrs. Midnight?

Mid. Mrs. Midnight! Is that all?—Why not mother, aunt, grandmother? Sir, I have done more for you this moment, than all the relations you have in the world.

Y. W. Let me hear it.

Mid. By the strength of this potent inspiration, I have made you a peer of England, with seven thousand pounds a year.—My lord, I wish you joy.

[Drinks.]

Y. W. The woman's mad, I believe.

Mid. Quick, quick, my lord! counterfeit a letter presently from Germany, that your brother is killed in a duel: let it be directed to your father, and fall into the hands of the steward when you are by. What sort of a fellow is the steward?

Y. W. Why, a timorous half-honest man, that a little persuasion will make a whole knave. He wants courage to be thoroughly just, or entirely a villain—but good backing will make him either.

Mid. And he sha'n't want that! I tell you the letter must come into his hands when you are by; upon this you must take immediate possession, and so you have the best part of the law on your side.

Y. W. But suppose my brother comes in the mean time.

Mid. This must be done this very moment. Let him come when you're in possession, I'll warrant we'll find a way to keep him out.

Y. W. But how, my dear contriver?

Mid. By your father's will, man, your father's will—That is, one that your father might have made, and which we will make for him. I'll send you a nephew of my own, a lawyer, that shall do the business; go, get into possession, I say: let us have but

the estate to back the suit, and you'll find the law too strong for justice, I warrant you.

Y. W. My oracle! How shall we revel in delights when this great prediction is accomplished—But one thing yet remains, my brother's mistress, the charming Constance—Let her be mine——

Mid. Pho, pho, she's your's o' course; she's contracted to you: for she's engaged to marry no man but my Lord Wou'dbe's son and heir; now you being the person, she's recoverable by law.

Y. W. Marry her! No, no, she's contracted to him; 't were injustice to rob a brother of his wife, an easier favour will satisfy me.

Mid. Why, truly, as you say, that favour is so easy, that I wonder they make such a bustle about it.—But get you gone and mind your affairs, I must about mine. Oh! I had forgot—Where's that foolish letter you had this morning from Richmore?

Y. W. I have posted it up in the chocolate-house.

Mid. Yaw, [*Sbricks.*] I shall fall into fits; hold me.

Y. W. No, no, I did but jest; here it is.—But be assured, madam, I wanted only time to have exposed it.

Mid. Ah! you barbarous man, why so?

Y. W. Because when knaves of our sex, and fools of your's meet, they make the best jest in the world.

Mid. Sir, the world has better share in the jest when we are the knaves, and you the fools. But look'e, sir, if ever you open your mouth about this trick—I'll discover all your tricks! therefore silence and safety on both sides.

Y. W. Ma lam, you need not doubt my silence at presence, because my own affairs will employ me sufficiently; so there's your letter. [*Gives the letter.*] And now to write my own. [*Exit.*]

M. d. Adieu, my lord. "Let me see—[*Opens the letter and reads.*] 'If there be solemnity in protestations'—That's foolish, very foolish—Why should she expect solemnity in protestations? Um, um, um,—'I may still depend on the faith of my Richmore.'—Ah! poor Clelia!—Um, um, um, —'I can no longer hide the effects on 't from the world.' The effects on 't! How modestly is that expressed? Well, 'tis a pretty letter, and I'll keep it." [*Puts the letter in her pocket, and exit.*]

SCENE III.

Lord Wou'dbe's House. Enter Steward and his Wife.

Wife. You are to blame, you are much to blame, husband, in being so scrupulous.

Stew. 'Tis true: this foolish conscience of mine has been the greatest bar to my fortune.

Wife. And will ever be so. Tell me but one that thrives, and I'll shew you a hundred that starve by it. Do you think 'tis fourscore pounds a year makes my Lord Gouty's steward's wife live at the rate of four hundred? Upon my word, my dear, I'm as good a gentlewoman as she, and I expect to be maintained

accordingly: 'tis conscience, I warrant, that buys her the point-heads, and diamond necklace? Was it conscience that bought her the fine house in Jermain-street? Is it conscience that enables the steward to buy, when the lord is forced to sell?

Stew. But what would you have me do?

Wife. Do! Now 's your time; that small morsel of an estate your lord bought lately, a thing not worth mentioning; take it towards your daughter Molly's portion—What 's two hundred a year? 't will never be missed.

Stew. 'T is but a small matter, I must confess; and as a reward for my past faithful service, I think it but reasonable I should cheat a little now.

Wife. Reasonable! All the reason that can be. If the ungrateful world won't reward an honest man, why let an honest man reward himself. There 's five hundred pounds you received but two days ago, lay them aside—you may easily sink it in the charge of the funeral. Do, my dear, now, kiss me, and do it.

Stew. Well, you have such a winning way with you—But, my dear, I 'm so much afraid of my young lord's coming home: he 's a cunning close man, they say, and will examine my accounts very narrowly.

Wife. Ay, my dear, would you had the younger brother to deal with, you might manage him as you pleased—I see him coming. Let us weep, let us weep. [*They pull out their handkerchiefs, and seem to mourn.*]

Enter Young Wou'dbe.

Stew. Ah, sir! we have all lost a father, a friend, and a supporter.

Y. W. Ay, Mr. Steward, we must submit to fate, as he has done. And it is no small addition to my grief, honest Mr. Clearaccount, that it is not in my power to supply my father's place to you and your's. Your sincerity and justice to the dead merits the greatest regard from those that survive him. Had I but my brother's ability, or he my inclinations, I'll assure you, Mrs. Clearaccount, you should not have such cause to mourn.

Wife. Ah, good noble sir!

Stew. Your brother, sir, I hear, is a very severe man.

Y. W. He is what the world calls a prudent man, Mr. Steward: I have often heard him very severe upon men of your business; and has declared, that for form's sake indeed he would keep a steward, but that he would inspect into all his accounts himself.

Wife. Aye, Mr. Wou'dbe, you have more sense than to do these things; you have more honour than to trouble your head with your own affairs. Would to heaven we were to serve you.

Y. W. Would I could serve you, madam—without injustice to my brother.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. A letter for my Lord Wou'dbe.

Stew. It comes too late, alas! for his perusal; let me see it. [*Opens and reads.*] ‘Frankfort, October 10, New Style.’ Frankfort! Where’s Frankfort, sir?

Y. W. In Germany. This letter must be from my brother! I suppose he’s coming home.

Stew. ’Tis none of his hand. Let me see. [*Reads.*

‘My lord,

‘I am troubled at this unhappy occasion of sending to your lordship. Your brave son, and my dear friend, was yesterday unfortunately killed in a duel by a German Count——’

I shall love a German Count as long as I live. My lord, my lord, now I may call you so, since your elder brother’s dead.

Y. W. and Wife. How!

Stew. Read there.

[*Gives the letter; Wou’dbe peruses it.*

Y. W. O, my fate! a father and a brother in one day! Heavens! ’Tis too much——Where is the fatal messenger?

Ser. A gentleman, sir, who said he came post on purpose. He was afraid the contents of the letter would unqualify my lord for company, so he would take another time to wait on him.

Y. W. Nay, then ’tis true; and there is truth in dreams. Last night I dreamed——

Wife. Nay, my lord, I dreamed too. I dreamed I saw your brother dressed in a long minister’s gown, (Lord bless us!) with a book in his hand, walking before a dead body to the grave.

Y. W. Well, Mr. Clearaccount, get mourning ready.

Stew. Will your Lordship have the old coach covered, or a new one made?

Y. W. A new one. The old coach, with the grey horses, I give to Mrs. Clearaccount here; 't is not fit she should walk the streets.

Wife. Heavens bless the German Count, I say——
But, my lord——

Y. W. No reply, madam, you shall have it——
And receive it but as the earnest of my favours. Mr. Clearaccount, I double your salary and all the servants wages, to moderate their grief for our great losses.—
Pray, sir, take order about these affairs.

Stew. I shall, my lord. [*Exeunt Stew. and Wife.*]

Y. W. So! I have got possession of the castle, and if I had but a little law to fortify me now, I believe we might hold it out a great while. Oh! here comes my attorney. Mr. Subtleman your servant.

Enter SUBTLEMAN.

Sub. My lord, I wish you joy. My aunt Midnight has sent me to receive your commands.

Y. W. Has she told you any thing of the affair?

Sub. Not a word, my lord.

Y. W. Why then——come nearer.——Can you make a man right heir to an estate during the life of an elder brother?

Sub. I thought you had been the eldest.

Y. W. That we are not yet agreed upon; for you

must know, there is an impertinent fellow that takes a fancy to dispute the seniority with me. For look 'e, sir, my mother has unluckily sowed discord in the family, by bringing forth twins: my brother, 'tis true, was first born; but I believe from the bottom of my heart I was the first begotten.

Sub. I understand—you are come to an estate and dignity, that by justice indeed is your own, but by law it falls to your brother.

Y. W. I had rather, Mr. Subtleman, it were his by justice, and mine by law: for I would have the strongest title, if possible.

Sub. I am very sorry there should happen any breach between brethren: so I think it would be but a Christian and charitable act to take away all farther disputes, by making you true heir to the estate by the last will of your father. Look 'e, I'll divide stakes—you shall yield the eldership and honour to him, and he shall quit his estate to you.

Y. W. Why, as you say, I do n't much care if I do grant him the eldest, half an hour is but a trifle: but how shall we do about his will? Who shall we get to prove it?

Sub. Never trouble yourself for that: I expect a cargo of witnesses and usquebaugh by the first fair wind.

Y. W. But we can't stay for them: it must be done immediately.

Sub. Well, well; we'll find some body, I warrant you, to make oath of his last words.

Y. W. That's impossible; for my father died of an apoplexy, and did not speak at all.

Sub. That's nothing, sir: he's not the first dead man that I have made to speak.

Y. W. You're a great master of speech, I don't question, sir; and I can assure you there will be ten guineas for every word you extort from him in my favour.

Sub. O, sir, that's enough to make your great grandfather speak.

Y. W. Come, then, I'll carry you to my steward; he shall give you the names of the manors, and the true titles and denominations of the estate, and then you shall go to work. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.

Changes to the Park. RICHMORE and TRUEMAN meeting.

Rich. O, brave cuz! you are very happy with the fair, I find. Pray which of these two ladies you encountered just now has your adoration?

True. She that commands by forbidding it: and since I had courage to declare to herself, I dare now own it to the world—Aurelia, sir, is my angel.

Rich. Ha! *[Pauses.]* Sir, I find you're of every body's religion; but methinks you make a bold flight at first: do you think your Captain's pay will stake against so high a gamester?

True. What do you mean?

Rich. Mean! Bless me, sir, mean! You're a man of mighty honour we all know. But I'll tell you a secret. The thing is public already.

True. I should be proud that all mankind were acquainted with it; I should despise the passion that could make me either ashamed, or afraid to own it.

Rich. Ha, ha, ha! Pr'ythee, dear Captain, no more of these rhodomontado's; "you may as soon put a standing army upon us" I'll tell you another secret—Five hundred pound is the least penny.

Ture. Nay, to my knowledge, she has fifteen hundred.

Rich. Nay, to my knowledge, she took five.

True. Took five! How! Where?

Rich. In her lap, in her lap, Captain; where should it be?

True. I'm amazed.

Rich. So am I, that she could be so unreasonable—Fifteen hundred pounds; 'Sdeath! had she that price from you?

True. 'Sdeath, I meant her portion.

Rich. Why, what have you to do with her portion?

True. I loved her up to marriage, by this light.

Rich. Marriage! Ha, ha, ha! I love the gypsy for her cunning.—A young, easy, amorous, credulous fellow "of two and twenty," was just the game she wanted; I find she presently singled you out from the herd.

True. You distract me!

Rich. A soldier too, that must follow the wars abroad, and leave her to engagements at home.

True. Death and furies! I'll be revenged.

Rich. Why, what can you do? You'll challenge her, will you?

True. Her reputation was spotless when I went over.

Rich. "So was the reputation of Mareschal Boufflers." But d'ye think, that while you were beating the French abroad, that we were idle at home? No, no; we have had our sieges, our capitulations, and surrenders, and all that. We have cut ourselves out good winter quarters as well as you.

True. And are you billeted there?

Rich. Look 'e, Trueman, you ought to be very trusty to a secret, that has saved you from destruction. In plain terms, I have buried five hundred pounds in that little spot, and I should think it very hard, if you took it over my head.

True. Not by a lease for life, I can assure you: but I shall——

Rich. What? You ha'n't five hundred pounds to give. Look 'e, since you can make no sport, spoil none. In a year or two she dwindles to a perfect basset-bank; every body may play at it that pleases, and then you may put in for a piece or two.

True. Dear sir, I could worship you for this.

Rich. Not for this, nephew! for I did not intend it, but I came to seek you upon another affair. Were not you at court last night?

True. I was.

Rich. Did you not talk to Clelia, my Lady Taper's niece?

True. A fine woman?

Rich. Well; I met her upon the stairs; and handing her to her coach, she asked me, if you were not my nephew? And said two or three warm things, that persuade me she likes you: her relations have interest at court, and she has money in her pocket.

True. But—this devil Aurelia still sticks with me.

Rich. What then! The way to love in one place with success, is to marry in another with convenience. Clelia has four thousand pounds; this applied to your reigning ambition, whether love or advancement, will go a great way: and for her virtue, and conduct, be assured that nobody can give a better account of it than myself.

True. I am willing to believe from this late accident, that you consult my honour and interest in what you propose; and therefore I am satisfied to be governed.

Rich. I see the very lady in the walk. We'll about it.

True. I wait on you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

Changes to Lord Wou'dbe's House. Enter Young WOU'DBE, SUBTLEMAN, and Steward.

Y. W. Well, Mr. Subtleman, you are sure the will is firm and good in law.

Sub. I warrant you, my lord: and for the last words to prove it, here they are. Look 'e, Mr. Clear-account—Yes—that is an answer to the question that was put to him, you know, by those about him when he was a dying—Yes; or No, he must have said; so we have chosen Yes——‘Yes, I have made my will, as it may be found in the custody of Mr. Clear-account my steward; and I desire it may stand as my last will and testament.’ Did you ever hear a dying man’s words more to the purpose! An apoplexy! I tell you, my Lord, had intervals to the last.

Stew. Ay, but how shall these words be proved?

Sub. My lord shall speak them now.

Y. W. Shall he, faith!

Sub. Ay, now—if the corps be n’t buried——Look 'e, sir, these words must be put into his mouth, and drawn out again before us all: and if they won’t be his last words then—I’ll be perjured.

Y. W. What, violate the dead! It must not be, Mr. Subtleman.

Sub. With all my heart, sir! But I think you had better violate the dead of a tooth or so, than violate the living of seven thousand pounds a year.

Y. W. But is there no other way?

Sub. No, sir. Why, d’ye think Mr. Clearaccount here will hazard soul and body to swear they are his last words, unless they be made his last words; for my part, sir, I’ll swear to nothing but what I see with my eyes come out of a man’s mouth.

Y. W. But it looks so unnatural.

Sub. What! to open a man's mouth, and put in a bit of paper!—This is all.

Y. W. But the body is cold, and his teeth can't be got asunder.

Sub. But what occasion has your father for teeth now? I tell you what; I knew a gentleman, three days buried, taken out of his grave, and his dead hand set to his last will, unless somebody made him sign another afterwards; and I know the estate to be held by that tenure to this day: and a firm tenure it is; for a dead hand holds fast, and let me tell you, dead teeth will fasten as hard.

Y. W. Well, well, use your pleasure, you understand the law best. [*Exeunt Subtleman and Steward.* What a mighty confusion is brought in families by sudden death? Men should do well to settle their affairs in time. Had my father done this before he was taken ill, what a trouble had he saved us? But he was taken suddenly, poor man!

Re-enter SUBTLEMAN.

Sub. Your father still bears you the old grudge, I find: it was with much struggling he consented: I never knew a man so loth to speak in my life.

Y. W. He was always a man of few words.

Sub. Now I may safely bear witness myself, as the scrivener there present—I love to do things with a clear conscience. [*Subscribes.*

Y. W. But the law requires three witnesses.

Sub. Oh! I shall pick up a couple more, that per-

haps may take my word for it——But is not Mr. Clearaccount in your interest?

Y. W. I hope so.

Sub. Then he shall be one: a witness in the family goes a great way; besides, these foreign evidences are risen confoundedly since the wars. I hope, if mine escape the privateers, to make an hundred pound an ear of every head of them——But the Steward is an honest man, and shall save you the charges. [*Exit.*]

Y. W. The pride of birth, the heats of appetite, and fear of want, are strong temptations to injustice. But why injustice?—The world hath broke all civilities with me, and left me in the eldest state of nature, wild, where force or cunning first created right. I cannot say, I ever knew a father—'Tis true, I was begotten in his life-time, but I was posthumous born, and lived not till he died——My hours indeed I numbered, but never enjoyed them, till this moment.——My brother! What is brother? We are all so; and the first two were enemies. He stands before me in the road of life, to rob me of my pleasures. My senses, formed by nature for delight, are all alarmed. My sight, my hearing, taste and touch, call loudly on me for their objects, and they shall be satisfied. [*Exit.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Levee. Young Wou'dbe dressing, and several Gentlemen whispering him by turns.

Young Wou'dbe.

SURELY the greatest ornament of quality is a clean and a numerous levee; such a croud of attendants for the cheap reward of words and promises, distinguishes the nobility from those that pay wages to their servants.

" [A Gentleman whispers.

" Sir, I shall speak to the commissioners, and use all

" my interest, I can assure you, sir. *[Another whispers.*

" Sir, I shall meet some of your board this evening;

" let me see you to-morrow. *[A third whispers.*

" Sir, I'll consider of it.—That fellow's breath

" stinks of tobacco. *[Aside.]*" O, Mr. Comick, your servant.

Com. My lord, I wish you joy; I have something to shew your lordship.

Y. W. What is it, pray, sir?

Com. I have an Elegy upon the dead lord, and a panegyric upon the living: *in utrumque paratus*, my lord.

Y. W. Ha, ha, very pretty, Mr. Comick—But pray, Mr. Comick, why do n't you write plays? It would give one an opportunity of serving you.

Com. My lord, I have writ one.

Y. W. Was it ever acted?

Com. No, my lord, but it has been a rehearsing these three years and a half.

Y. W. A long time. There must be a great deal of business in it surely.

Com. No, my lord, none at all.—I have another play just finished, but that I want a plot for 't.

Y. W. A plot! You should read the Italian and Spanish plays, Mr. Comick—I like your verses here mightily.—Here, Mr. Clearaccount,

Com. Now for five guineas at least. [*Aside.*

Y. W. Here, give Mr. Comick, give him—give him the Spanish play that lies in the closet window.—

“Captain, can I do you any service?

“*Capt.* Pray, my lord, use your interest with the general for that vacant commission. I hope, my lord, the blood I have already lost may intitle me to spill the remainder in my country's cause.

“*Y. W.* All the reason in the world—captain, you may depend upon me for all the service I can.

“*Gen.* I hope your lordship won't forget to speak to the general about that vacant commission: although I have never made a campaign, yet, my lord, my interest in the country can raise me men, which, I think, should prefer me to that gentleman, whose bloody disposition frightens the poor people from listing.

“*Y. W.* All the reason in the world—sir, you may depend upon me for all the service in my power.—

“Captain, I'll do your business for you.—Sir, I'll speak to the general, I shall see him at the house

[*To the Gentlemen.*]

Enter a Citizen.

Oh, Mr. Alderman, your servant.—Gentlemen all, I beg y^r pardon. [*Exeunt Levée.*]

Mr. alderman, have you any service to command me?

Ald. Your lordship's humble servant.—I have a favour to beg: You must know, I have a graceless son, a fellow that drinks and swears eternally, keeps a whore in every corner of the town; in short he's fit for no kind of thing but a soldier. I'm so tir'd of him, that I intend to throw him into the army: let the fellow be ruined if he will.

Y. W. I commend your paternal care, sir. Can I do you any service in this affair?

Ald. Yes, my lord: there is a vacant company in colonel what-d'ye-call-'em's regiment, and if your lordship would but spe k to the general——

Y. W. Has your son ever served?

Ald. Served! Yes, my lord, he's an ensign in the train-bands now.

Y. W. Has he ever signalized his courage?

Ald. Often, often, my lord; but one day in particular, you must know, his captain was so busy shipping off a cargo of cheese, that he left my son to command in his place. Would you believe it, my lord? he charged up Cheapside in the front of the buff-coats, with such bravery and courage, that I could not forbear wishing, in the loyalty of my heart, for ten thousand such officers upon the Rhine. Ah, my lord! we must employ such fellows as he, or we shall never humble the French king—Now, my lord, if you could

find a convenient time to hint these things to the general—

Y. W. All the reason in the world, Mr. Alderman, I'll do you all the service I can.

Ald. You may tell him, he's a man of courage, fit for the service; and then he loves hardship. He sleeps every other night in the round-house.

Y. W. I'll do you all the service I can.

Ald. Then, my lord, he salutes with his pike so very handsomely, it went to his mistress's heart t'other day—and he beats a drum like an angel.

Y. W. I'll do you all the service I can—

[*Not taking the least notice of the Alderman all this while, but dressing himself in the glass.*]

Ald. But, my lord, the hurry of your lordship's affairs may put my business out of your head; therefore, my lord, I'll presume to leave you some memorandum.

Y. W. I'll do you all the service I can—

[*Not minding him.*]

Ald. Pray, my lord, [*Pulling him by the sleeve.*] give me leave, for a memorandum; my glove, I suppose, will do. Here, my lord, pray remember me.

[*Lays his glove upon the table and exit.*]

Y. W. I'll do you all the service I can—What, is he gone? 'Tis the most rude, familiar fellow—Faugh! what a greasy gauntlet is here—[*A purse drops out of the glove.*] Oh! No, the glove is a clean, well-made glove, and the owner of it the most respectable person I have seen this morning, he knows what distance [*Chinking the purse.*] is due to a man of quality—But what must I do for this? Frisieur [*To*

his Valet.] do you remember what the alderman said to me?

Fris. No, my lord, I thought you lordship had.

Y. W. This blockhead thinks a man of quality can mind what people say—when they do something, 'tis another case. Here, call him back. [*Exit Frisieur.*] He talked something of the general and his son, and train-bands, I know not what stuff.

Re-enter Alderman and Frisieur.

Oh, Mr. Alderman, I have put your memorandum in my pocket.

Ald. Oh, my lord, you do me too much honour.

Y. W. But, Mr. Alderman, the business you were talking of, it shall be done; but if you gave a short note of it to my secretary, it would not be amiss—
But, Mr. Alderman, ha'n't you the fellow to this glove, it fits me mighty well. [*Putting on the glove.*] It looks so like a challenge to give a man an odd glove; and I would not have any thing that looks like enmity between you and I, Mr. Alderman.

Ald. Truly, my lord, I intended the other glove for a memorandum to the colonel; but since your lordship has a mind to't—

[*Gives the glove.*]

Y. W. Here, Frisieur, lead this gentleman to my secretary, and bid him take a note of his business.

Ald. But, my lord, don't do me all the service you can now.

Y. W. Well, I won't do you all the service I can—These citizens have a strange capacity of soliciting sometimes.

[*Exit Ald.*]

Enter Steward.

Stew. My lord, here are your taylor, your vintner, your bookseller, and half a dozen more, with their bills, at the door, and they desire their money.

Y. W. Tell 'em, Mr. Clearaccount, that when I was a private gentleman, I had nothing else to do but to run in debt, and now that I have got into a higher rank, I'm so very busy I can't pay it. As for that clamorous rogue of a taylor, speak him fair, till he has made up my liveries—then, about a year and a half hence I shall be at leisure to put him off a year and a half longer.

Stew. My lord, there's a gentleman below calls himself Mr. Basset; he says that your lordship owes him fifty guineas, that he won of you at cards.

Y. W. Look 'e, sir, the gentleman's money is a debt of honour, and must be paid immediately.

“Stew. Your father thought otherwise, my lord, he always took care to have the poor tradesmen satisfied, whose only subsistence lay in the use of their money, and was used to say, that nothing was honourable but what was honest.

“Y. W. My father might say what he pleased, he was a nobleman of very singular humour—but in my notion, there are not two things in nature more different than honour and honesty. Now, your honesty is a little mechanic quality, well enough among citizens, people that do nothing but pitiful mean actions according to law; but your honour flies a much higher pitch, and will do any thing

"that's free and spontaneous, but scorns to level it—
"self to what is only just."

Stew. But I think it is a little hard to have these poor people starve for want of their money, and yet pay this sharpening rascal fifty guineas.

Y. W. Sharpening rascal! What a barbarism that is! Why he wears as good wigs, as fine linen, and keeps as good company as any at White's; and, between you and I, sir, this sharpening rascal, as you are pleased to call him, shall make more interest among the nobility with his cards and counters, than a soldier shall with his sword and pistol. Pray let him have fifty guineas immediately.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Street. Enter Elder WOU'DEE writing in a Pocket-Book, in a Riding-Habit.

E. W. 'Monday the 14th of December, 1702, I arrived safe in London, and so concluding my travels—'

[*Putting up his book.*]

Now welcome, country, father, friends,
My brother too (if brothers can be friends:)
But, above all, my charming fair, my Constance.
Through all the mazes of my wand'ring steps,
Through all the various climes that I have run,
Her love has been the loadstone of my course,
Her eyes the stars that pointed me the way.
Had not her charms my heart intire possess'd,
Who knows what Circe's artful voice and look

Might have ensnar'd my travelling youth,
And fix'd me to enchantment ?

Enter TEAGUE, with a Port-manteau. He throws it down and sits on it.

Here comes my fellow-traveller. What makes you sit upon the port-manteau, Teague ? You'll rumple the things.

Tea. By my shoul, maishter, I did carry the port-mantel till it tired me; and now the port-mantel shall carry me till I tire him.

E. W. And how d'ye like London, Teague, after our travels ?

Tea. Fet, dear joy, 't is the bravest place I have sheen in my peregrinations, exshepting my nown brave shity of Carrickfergus.—Uf, uf, dere ish a very fragrant shmell hereabouts—maishter, shall I run to that paishty-cook's for shix-pennyworth of boil'd beef ?

E. W. Though this fellow travelled the world over, he would never lose his brogue nor his stomach.—Why, you cormorant ! so hungry and so early ?

Tea. Early ! Deel take me, maishter, 'tish a great deal more than almost pasht twelve o'clock.

“ *E. W.* Thou art never happy, unless thy guts be stuffed up to the eyes.

“ *Tea.* Oh, maishter, dere ish a dam way of distance, and the deel a bit between.”

Enter Young WOU'DBE in a Chair, with four or five Footmen before him, and passes over the stage.

E. W. Hey-day ! Who comes here ? With one, two,

three, four, five footmen! Some young fellow just tasting the sweet vanity of fortune. Run, Teague, enquire who that is.

Tea. Yes, maishter. [*Runs to one of the Footmen.*] Sir, will you give my humble shervice to your maishter, and tell him to shend me word fat name ish upon him?

Foot. You must know fat name ish upon him?

Tea. Yesh, fet wou'd I.

Foot. Why, what are you, sir?

Tea. By my shoul, I am a shentleman bred and born, and dere ish my maishter.

Foot. Then your master wou'd know it?

Tea. Arrah, you fool, ish it not the same ting?

Foot. Then tell your master, 'tis the young lord Wou'dbe, just come to his estate by the death of his father and elder brother. [*Exit Footman.*]

E. W. What do I hear?

Tea. You hear that you are dead, maishter; fere vil you pleashe to be buried?

E. W. But art thou sure it was my brother?

Tea. By my shoul it was his nown self; I know'd him very well after his man told me.

E. W. This business requires that I be convinced with my own eyes. I'll follow him, and know the bottom on't. Stay here till I return.

Tea. Dear maishter, have a care upon your shelf. Now they know you are dead, by my shoul they may kill you.

E. W. Don't fear: none of his servants know me, and I'll take care to keep my face from his sight. "It

"concerns me to conceal myself, till I know the engines of this contrivance." Be sure you stay till I come to you; and let nobody know whom you belong to. [Exit.

Tea. Oh, ho, hon, poor Teague is left all alone.

[Sits on the port-manteau.

Enter SUBTLEMAN and STEWARD.

Sub. And you won't swear to the will?

Stew. My conscience tells me I dare not do't with safety.

Sub. But if we make it lawful what should we fear? We now think nothing against conscience, till the cause be thrown out of court.

Stew. In you, sir, 'tis no sin, because 'tis the principle of your profession: but in me, sir, 'tis downright perjury indeed. You can't want witnesses enough, since money won't be wanting—and you must lose no time; for I heard just now, that the true Lord Won'dbe was seen in town, or his ghost.

Sub. It was his ghost, to be sure; for a nobleman without an estate is but the shadow of a lord.—Well, take no care: leave me to myself; I am near the Friars, and ten to one shall pick up an evidence.

Stew. Speed you well, sir. [Exit.

Sub. There's a fellow that has hunger and the gallows pictured in his face, and looks like one for my purpose.—How now, honest friend, what have you got under you there?

Tea. Nothing, dear joy.

Sub. Nothing! Is it not a port-manteau?

Tea. That is nothing to you.

Sub. The fellow 's a wit.

Tea. Fait am I! My grandfather was an Irish poet—He did write a great book of verses concerning the vars between St. Patrick and the wolf-dogs.

Sub. Then thou art poor, I'm afraid?

Tea. By my shoul, my sole generation ish so—I have noting but thish port-manteau, and dat itsself ish not my own.

Sub. Why, who does it belong to?

Tea. To my maishter, dear joy.

Sub. Then you have a master?

Tea. Fait I have, but he's dead.

Sub. Right! And how do you intend to live?

Tea. By eating, dear joy, fen I can get it, and by sleeping fen I can get none.—'Tish the fashion of Ireland.

Sub. What was your master's name pray?

Tea. [*Aside.*] I will tell a lee now; but it shall be a true one——Macfadin, dear joy, was his naam. He vent over vith King Jamish into France.——He was my maishter once. Deere ish the true lee noo.

[*Aside.*]

Sub. What employment had he?

Tea. *Je ne scay pas.*

Sub. What, can you speak French?

Tea. *Ouy, Monsieur,*—I did travel France and Spain, and Italy—Dear joy, I did kish the pope's toe, and dat will excuse me all the sins of my life: and fen I am dead, St. Patrick will excuse the rest.

Sub. A rare fellow for my purpose! [*Aside.*] Thou lookest like an honest fellow; and if you will go with me to the next tavern, I'll give thee a dinner and a glass of wine.

Tea. By my shoul 'tis dat I wanted, dear joy; come along, and I will follow you.

[*Runs out before Subtleman with the Port-manteau on his back.*]

Enter Elder WOU'DBE.

E. W. My father dead! my birth-right lost! How have my drowsy stars slept over my fortune? Ha! [*Looking about.*] My servant gone! The simple, poor, ungrateful wretch has left me. I took him up from poverty and want; and now he leaves me just as I found him. My clothes and money too! But why should I repine? Let man but view the dangers he has past, and few will fear what hazards are to come. "That Providence that has secured my life from robbers, shipwreck, and from sickness, is still the same; still kind whilst I am just." My death, I find, is firmly believed; but how it gained so universal credit, I fain would learn. Who comes here?—honest Mr. Fairbank! My father's goldsmith, a man of substance and integrity. The alteration of five years absence, with the report of my death, may shade me from his knowledge, till I enquire some news.

Enter FAIRBANK.

Sir, your humble servant.

Fair. Sir, I don't know you. [*Stunning him.*

E. W. I intend you no harm, sir; but seeing you come from my Lord Wou'dbe's house, I would ask you a question or two. Pray what distemper did my lord die of?

Fair. I am told it was an apoplexy.

E. W. And pray, sir, what does the world say? Is his death much lamented?

Fair. Lamented! My eyes that question should resolve. Friend, thou knewest him not; else thy own heart had answered thee.

E. W. His grief, methinks, chides my defect of filial duty. [*Aside.*] But I hope, sir, his loss is partly recompensed in the merits of his successor.

Fair. It might have been; but his eldest son, heir to his virtue and honour, was lately and unfortunately killed in Germany.

E. W. How unfortunately, sir?

Fair. Unfortunately for him, and us. I do remember him——He was the mildest, humblest, sweetest——youth.

E. W. Happy indeed had been my part in life, if I had left this human stage, whilst this so spotless, and so fair applause, had crowned my going off. [*Aside.*] Well, sir.

Fair. But those that saw him in his travels, told such wonders of his improvement, that the report recalled his father's years; and with the joy to hear his Hermes praised, he oft would break the chains of gout and age; and leaping up with strength of greenest youth,

cry, My Hermes is myself: methinks I live my sprightly days again, and I am young in him.

“E. W. Spite of all modesty, a man must own pleasure in the hearing of his praise. [Aside.]”

Fair. You’re thoughtful, sir. Had you any relation to the family we talk of?

E. W. None, sir, beyond my private concern in the public loss. But pray, sir, what character does the present lord bear?

Fair. Your pardon, sir. As for the dead, their memories are left unregarded, and tongues may touch them freely: but for the living, they have provided for the safety of their names by a strong inclosure of the law. There is a thing called *Scandalum Magnatum*, sir.

E. W. I commend your caution, sir; but be assured I intend not to entrap you. I am a poor gentleman, and having heard much of the charity of the old Lord Wou’dbe, I had a mind to apply to his son, and therefore enquired his character.

Fair. Alas! sir, things are changed; that house was once what poverty might go a pilgrimage to seek, and have its pains rewarded. The noble lord, the truly noble lord, held his estate, his honour and his house, as if they were only lent upon the interest of doing good to others. He kept a porter, not to exclude, but serve the poor. No creditor was seen to guard his going out, or watch his coming in: no craving eyes, but looks of smiling-gratitude. But now, that family, which, like a garden fairly kept, invited every stranger

to its fruit and shade, is now run over with weeds: nothing but wine and revelling within, a croud of noisy creditors without, a train of servants insolently proud—Would you believe it, sir, as I offered to go in just now, the rude porter pushed me back with his staff. I am at this present time (thanks to Providence and my industry) worth twenty thousand pounds. I pay the fifth part of this to maintain the liberty of the nation; and yet this slave, this impudent Swiss slave, offered to strike me.

E. W. 'T was hard, sir, very hard: and if they used a man of your substance so roughly, how will they manage me, that am not worth a groat?

Fair. I would not willingly defraud your hopes of what may happen. If you can drink and swear, perhaps——

E. W. I shall not pay that price for his lordship's bounty, would it extend to half he's worth. Sir, I give you thanks for your caution, and shall steer another course.

Fair. Sir, you look like an honest, modest gentleman. Come home with me; I am as able to give you a dinner as my lord; and you shall be very welcome to eat at my table every day, till you are better provided.

E. W. Good man. [*Aside.*] Sir, I must beg you to excuse me to-day; but I shall find a time to accept of your favours, or at least to thank you for them.

Fair. Sir, you shall be very welcome whenever you please. [*Exit.*

E. W. Generous citizen ! Surely, if Justice were an herald, she would give this tradesman a nobler coat of arms than my brother. But I delay : I long to vindicate the honour of my station, and to displace this bold usurper. But one concern, methinks, is nearer still : my Constance ! Should she, upon the rumour of my death, have fixed her heart elsewhere, then I were dead indeed ; but if she still prove true, brother, sit fast :

*I'll shake your strength, all obstacles remove,
Sustain'd by justice, and inspir'd by love.* [Exit.

SCENE III.

An Apartment. Enter CONSTANCE and AURELIA.

Con. For Heaven's sake, cousin, cease your impatient consolations : it but makes me angry, and raises two passions in me instead of one. You see I commit no extravagance, my grief is silent enough ; my tears make no noise to disturb any body. I desire no companion in my sorrows ; leave me to myself and you comfort me.

Aur. But, cousin, have you no regard to your reputation ? This immoderate concern for a young fellow. What will the world say ? You lament him like a husband.

Con. No ; you mistake : I have no rule nor method for my grief ; no pomp of black and darkened rooms ; no formal month for visits on my bed. I am content

with the slight mourning of a broken heart; and all my form is tears.

Enter MIDNIGHT.

Mid. Madam Aurelia, madam, don't disturb her. — Every thing must have its vent. 'Tis a hard case to be crossed in one's first love. But you should consider, madam, [*To Constance.*] that we are all born to die, some young, some old.

Con. Better we all died young, than to be plagued with age, as I am. I find other folks years are as troublesome to us as our own.

Mid. You have reason, you have cause to mourn. He was the handsomest man, and the sweetest babe, that I know; though I must confess too, that Ben had much the finer complexion when he was born: but then Hermes, yes Hermes, had the shape, that he had. But of all the infants that I ever beheld with my eyes, I think Ben had the finest ear, wax-work, perfect wax-work: "and then he did so splutter at the breast! — His nurse was a hale, well-complexioned, sprightly, "jade, as ever I saw; but her milk was a little too "stale, though at the same time 't was as blue and "clear as cambrick."

Aur. Do you intend all this, madam, for a consolation to my cousin?

Mid. No, no, madam, that 's to come. I tell you, fair lady, you have only lost the man; the estate and title are still your own; and this very moment I would salute you Lady Wou'dbe, if you pleased.

Con. Dear madam, your proposal is very tempting; let me consider but till to-morrow, and I'll give you an answer.

Mid. I knew it, I knew it; I said, when you were born, you would be a lady; I knew it. To-morrow, you say. My lord shall know it immediately. [*Exit.*]

Aur. What d'ye intend to do, cousin?

Con. To go into the country this moment, to be free from the impertinence of condolence, the persecution of that monster of a man, and that devil of a woman. O, Aurelia, I long to be alone, I am become so fond of grief, that I would fly where I might enjoy it all, and have no interruption in my darling sorrow.

Enter Elder WOU'DBE, unperceived.

E. W. In tears! perhaps for me! I'll try——

[*Drops a picture, and goes back to the entrance and listens.*]

Aur. If there be aught in grief delightful, don't grudge me a share.

Con. No, my dear Aurelia, I'll engross it all. I loved him so, methinks I should be jealous if any mourned his death besides myself. What's here!—

[*Takes up the picture.*] Ha! see, cousin! the very face and features of the man! Sure some officious angel has brought me this for a companion in my solitude. Now I am fitted out for sorrow. With this I'll sigh, with this converse, gaze on his image till I grow blind with weeping.

Aur. I'm amazed! how came it here?

Con. Whether by miracle or human chance, 't is all alike; I have it here: nor shall it ever separate from my breast—it's the only thing could give me joy, because it will encrease my grief.

E. W. [*Entering.*] Most glorious woman! now I am fond of life.

Aur. Ha! What's this? Your business, pray, sir?

E. W. With this lady. [*Goes to Constance, takes her hand, and kneels.*] Here let me worship that perfection, whose virtue might attract the listening angels, and make them smile to see such purity, so like themselves, in human shape.

Con. Hermes!

E. W. Your living Hermes, who shall die yours too.

Con. Now passion, powerful passion would bear
“me like a whirlwind to his arms—but my sex has
“bounds. 'T is wondrous, sir!

E. W. Most wondrous are the works of fate for
“man, and most closely laid is the serpentine line that
“guides him into happiness! That hidden power
“which did permit those arts to cheat me of my birth-
“right, had this surprise of happiness in store, well
“knowing that grief is the best preparative for joy.”

Con. “I never found the true sweets of love till this
“romantic turn! dead and alive! my stars are poeti-
“cal.” For heaven's sake, sir, unriddle your fortune.

E. W. That my dear brother must do: for he made the ænigma.

Aur. Methinks I stand here like a fool all this while: would I had some body or other to say a fine thing or two to me.

E. W. Madam, I beg ten thousand pardons: I have my excuse in my hand.

Aur. My lord, I wish you joy.

E. W. Pray, madam, don't trouble me with a title till I am better equipped for it. My peerage would look a little shabby in these robes.

Con. You have a good excuse, my lord; you can wear better when you please.

E. W. I have a better excuse, madam—These are the best I have.

Con. How, my lord!

E. W. Very true, madam; I am at present, I believe, the poorest peer in England. Hark 'e, Aurelia, pr'ythee lend me a piece or two.

Aur. Ha, ha, ha! a poor peer indeed! He wants a guinea.

Con. I'm glad on 't with all my heart.

E. W. Why so, madam?

Con. Because I can furnish you with five thousand.

E. W. Generous woman!

Enter TRUEMAN.

Ha! my friend too!

True. I am glad to find you here, my lord; here's a current report about town that you are killed. I was afraid it might reach this family, so I come to disprove the story, by your letter to me by the last post.

Aur. I'm glad he's come; now it will be my turn, cousin.

True. Now, my lord, I wish you joy ; and I expect the same from you.

E. W. With all my heart ; but upon what score ?

True. The old score, marriage.

E. W. To whom ?

True. To a neighbour lady here. [*Looking at Aurelia.*]

Aur. Impudence ! [*Aside.*] The lady may n't be so near as you imagine, sir.

True. The lady may n't be so near as you imagine, madam.

Aur. Do n't mistake me, sir ; I did not care if the lady were in Mexico.

True. Nor I neither, madam.

"*Aur.* You're very short, sir,

"*True.* The shortest pleasures are the sweetest, "you know."

Aur. Sir, you appear very different to me from what you were very lately.

True. Madam, you appear very different to me from what you were lately.

Aur. Strange !

[*This while Constance and Wou'dbe entertain one another in dumb shew.*]

True. Miraculous !

Aur. I could never have believed it.

True. Nor I, as I hope to be saved,

Aur. Ill manners !

True. Worse.

Aur. How have I deserved it, sir ?

True. How have I deserved it, madam ?

Aur. What?

True. You.

Aur. Riddles!

True. Women!—My lord you'll hear of me at White's. Farewell. *[Runs off.]*

E. W. What, Trueman gone!

Aur. Yes. *[Walks about in disorder.]*

Con. Bless me! what's the matter, cousin?

Aur. Nothing.

Con. Why are you uneasy?

Aur. Nothing.

Con. What ails you then?

Aur. Nothing—I do n't love the fellow—yet to be affronted! I can't bear it. *[Bursts out a crying, and exit.]*

Con. Your friend, my lord, has affronted Aurelia.

E. W. Impossible! His regard to me were sufficient security for his good behaviour here, though it were in his nature to be rude elsewhere.—She has certainly used him ill.

Con. Too well, rather.

E. W. Too well! have a care, madam! that, with some men, is the greatest provocation to a slight.

Con. Do n't mistake, my lord, her usage never went farther than mine to you; and I should take it very ill to be abused for it.

E. W. I'll follow him, and know the cause of it.

Con. No, my lord, I'll follow her, and know it: besides, your own affairs with your brother require you at present. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Lord Wou'dbe's House. Enter Young WOULD'BE and
SUBTLEMAN.*

Young Wou'dbe.

RETURNED! Who saw him? who spoke with him?
He can't be returned.

Sub. My lord, he's below at the gate, parlying with
the porter, who has private orders from me to admit
nobody till you send him word, that we may have the
more time to settle our affairs.

Y. W. 'T is a hard case, Mr. Subtleman, that a man
can't enjoy his right without all this trouble.

Sub. Ah, my lord, you see the benefit of law
now, what an advantage it is to the public for secur-
ing of property. Had you not the law of your side,
who knows what devices might be practised to defraud
you of your right. But I have secured all—The
will is in true form; and you have two witnesses al-
ready to swear to the last words of your father.

Y. W. Then you have got another?

Sub. Yes, yes, a right one; and I shall pick up an-
other time enough before the term. And I have
planted three or four constables in the next room, to
take care of your brother, if he should be boisterous.

Y. W. Then you think we are secure.

Sub. Ay, ay, let him come now when he pleases : I'll go down and give orders for his admittance.

Y. W. Unkind brother ! to disturb me thus, just in the swing and stretch of my full fortune ! Where is the tie of blood and nature, when brothers will do this ? had he but staid till Constance had been mine, his presence or his absence had been then indifferent.

Enter MIDNIGHT.

Mid. Well, my lord, [*Fants as out of breath.*] you'll never be satisfied till you have broke my heart. I have had such ado yonder about your Madam Constance—but she's your own.

Y. W. How ! my own ! Ah ! my dear help-mate, I am afraid we are routed in that quarter : my brother's come home.

Mid. Your brother come home ; then I'll go travel. [*Going.*]

Y. W. Hold, hold, madam, we are all secure ; we have provided for her reception : your nephew Subtleman has stopped up all passages to the estate.

Mid. Ay, Subtleman is a pretty thriving ingenious boy. Little do you think who is the father of him. I'll tell you ; Mr. Moabite, the rich Jew in Lombard-street.

Y. W. Moabite the Jew !

Mid. You shall hear, my lord—One evening, as I was very grave in my own house, reading the—
“ Weekly Preparation—Ay, it was the Weekly Preparation, I do remember particularly well. What

“ hears me I—but pat, pat, very softly at the door.
“ Come in, cries I, and presently enters Mr. Moa-
“ bite, followed by a snug chair, the windows close
“ drawn, and in it was a fine young virgin just upon
“ the point of being delivered.—We were all in a
“ great hurly-burly for a while to be sure; but our
“ production was a fine boy. I had fifty guineas for
“ my trouble, the lady was wrapped up very warm,
“ placed in her chair, and re-conveyed to the place
“ she came from. Who she was, or what she was,
“ I could never learn, though my maid said that the
“ chair went through the Park—but the child was
“ left with me——The father would have made a Jew
“ on it, presently, but I swore, if he committed such
“ a barbarity on the infant, that I would discover all.
“ So I had him brought up a good christian, and
“ bound ’prentice to an attorney.

“ *Y. W.* Very well.

“ *Mid.* Ah, my lord! there’s many a pretty fel-
“ low in London that knows as little of their true fa-
“ ther and mother as he does; I have had several such
“ jobs in my time—there was one Scotch nobleman
“ that brought me four in half a year.

“ *Y. W.* Four, and how are they all provided for?

“ *Mid.* Very handsomely indeed; they were two
“ sons and two daughters; the eldest son rides in the
“ first troop of guards, and the other is a very pretty
“ fellow, and his father’s valet de chambre.

“ *Y. W.* And what is become of the daughters,
“ pray?

"Mid. Why one of them is a mantua-maker, and
"the youngest has got into the play-house."—Ay,
ay, my lord, let Subtleman alone, I'll warrant he'll
manage your brother. Ads my life, here is somebody
coming, I would not be seen.

Y. W. 'T is my brother, and he'll meet you upon
the stairs! adso, get into this closet till he be gone.

[Shuts her into the closet.]

Enter Elder WOU'DBE and SUBTLEMAN.

My brother! dearest brother, welcome

[Runs and embraces him.]

E. W. I can't dissemble, sir, else I would return
your false embrace.

Y. W. False embrace! still suspicious of me! I
thought that five years absence might have cooled the
unmanly heats of our childish days; that I am over-
joyed at your return, let this testify; this moment I
resign all right and title to your honour, and salute
you lord.

E. W. I want not your permission to enjoy my
right; here I am lord and master without your resig-
nation; and the first use I make of my authority, is
to discard that rude, bull-faced fellow at the door,—
Where is my steward?

Enter CLEARACCOUNT.

Mr. Clearaccount, let that pampered centinel below
this minute be discharged. Brother, I wonder you
could feed such a swarm of lazy idle drones about you,

and leave the poor industrious bees, that fed you from their hives, to want. Steward, look to't; if I have not discharges for every farthing of my father's debts upon my toilet to-morrow morning, you shall follow the tip-staff, I can assure you.

Y. W. Hold, hold, my lord, you usurp too large a power, methinks, over my family.

E. W. Your family!

Y. W. Yes, my family; you have no title to lord it here. Mr. Clearaccount, you know your master.

E. W. How! a combination against me! Brother, take heed how you deal with one, that cautious of your falsehood, comes prepared to meet your arts, and can retort your cunning to your infamy: your black unnatural designs against my life, before I went abroad, my charity can pardon; but my prudence must remember to guard me from your malice for the future.

Y. W. Our father's weak and fond surmise! which he upon his death-bed owned; and to recompense me for that injurious, unnatural suspicion, he left me sole heir to his estate. Now, my lord, my house and servants are at your service.

E. W. Villany beyond example! have I not letters from my father of scarce a fortnight's date, where he repeats his fears for my return, lest it should again expose me to your hatred?

Sub. Well, well, these are no proofs, no proofs my lord; they wont pass in court against positive evidence. Here is your father's will, *signatum & sigillatum*, besides his last words to confirm it, to which I

can take my positive oath in any court of Westminster.

E. W. What are you, sir?

Sub. Of Clifford's Inn, my lord, I belong to the law.

E. W. Thou art the worm and maggot of the law, bred in the bruised and rotten parts, and now art nourished on the same corruption that produced thee. The English law, as planted first, was like the English oak, shooting its spreading arms around, to shelter all that dwelt beneath its shade: but now whole swarms of caterpillars, like you, hang in such clusters upon every branch, that the once thriving tree now sheds infectious vermin on our heads.

Y. W. My lord, I have some company above; if your lordship will drink a glass of wine, we shall be glad of the honour: if not, I shall attend you at any court of judicature, whenever you please to summon me.

E. W. Hold, sir—perhaps my father's dying weakness was imposed upon, and he has left him heir; if so, his will shall freely be obeyed. [*Aside.*]—Brother, you say you have a will?

Sub. Here it is.

[*Shewing a parchment.*]

E. W. Let me see it.

Sub. There is no precedent for that, my lord.

E. W. Upon my honour, I'll restore it.

Y. W. Upon my honour, but you sha'n't.

[*Takes it from Sub. and puts it in his pocket.*]

E. W. This over-caution, brother, is suspicious.

Y. W. Seven thousand pounds a year is worth looking after.

E. W. Therefore you can't take it ill that I am a little inquisitive about it. Have you witnesses to prove my father's dying words?

Y. W. A couple in the house.

E. W. Who are they?

Sub. Witnesses, my lord! 'Tis unwarrantable to enquire into the merits of the cause out of court;—my client shall answer no more questions.

E. W. Perhaps, sir, upon a satisfactory account of his title, I intend to leave your client to the quiet enjoyment of his right, without troubling any court with the business; I therefore desire to know what kind of persons are these witnesses.

Sub. Oho, he's coming about. [*Aside.*] I told your lordship already, that I am one; another is in the house, one of my lord's footmen.

E. W. Where is this footman?

Y. W. Forth coming.

E. W. Produce him.

Sub. That I shall presently. The day's our own, sir, [*To Y. W.*] But you shall engage first to ask him no cross-questions. [*Exit.*]

E. W. I am not skilled in such. But, pray, brother, did my father quite forget me? left me nothing?

Y. W. Truly, my lord, nothing: he spoke but little, left no legacies.

E. W. 'Tis strange! he was extremely just, and loved me too; but perhaps—

Enter SUBTLEMAN *with* TEAGUE.

Sub. My lord, here 's another evidence.

E. W. Teague!

Y. W. My brother's servant!

[They all four stare upon one another.]

Sub. His servant!

Tea. Maishter! see here, maishter, I did get all dish [*Chinks money.*] for being an evidensh, dear joy; and by my shoule, I will give the half of it to you, if you will give me your permission to make swear against you.

E. W. My wonder is divided between the villany of the fact, and the amazement of the discovery.—Teague! my very servant! sure I dream.

Tea. Fet, dere ish no dreaming in the cash; I'm sure the croon pieceish are awake, for I have been talking with dem dish half hour.

Y. W. Ignorant, unlucky man, thou hast ruined me; why had not I a sight of him before?

Sub. I thought the fellow had been too ignorant to be a knave.

Tea. By my shoule, you lee, dear joy. I can be a knave, as well as you, fen I think it conveniency.

E. W. Now, brother! Speechless! Your oracle too silenced! "Is all your boasted fortune sunk to the guilty blushing for a crime?" But I scorn to insult. Let disappointment be your punishment: but for your lawyer there—Teague, lay hold of him.

H

Sub. Let none dare to attach me without a legal warrant.

Tea. Attach! no, dear joy, I cannot attach you—out I can catch you by the throat, after the fashion of Ireland.
[*Takes Sub. by the throat.*]

Sub. An assault! an assault!

Tea. No, no, 'tis noting but choaking, noting but choaking.

E. W. Hold him fast, Teague. Now, sir, [*To Y. W.*] because I was your brother, you would have betrayed me; and because I am your brother, I forgive it; dispose yourself as you think fit. I'll order Mr. Clearaccount to give you a thousand pounds.—Go, take it; and pay me by your absence.

Y. W. I scorn your beggarly benevolence: had my designs succeeded, I would not have allowed you the weight of a wafer, and therefore will accept none. As for that lawyer, he deserves to be pilloried, not for his cupping in deceiving you, but for his ignorance in betraying me. The villain has defrauded me of seven thousand pounds a year. Farewell.
[*Going.*]

Enter MIDNIGHT *out of the Closet, runs to Young Wou'dbe, and kneels.*

Mid. My lord, my dear Lord Wou'dbe, I beg you ten thousand pardons.

Y. W. What offence hast thou done to me?

Mid. An offence the most injurious. I have hitherto concealed a secret in my breast, to the offence of justice, and the defrauding your lordship of your

true right and title. You, Benjamin Wou'dbe, with the crooked back, are the eldest born, and true heir to the estate and dignity.

Omnes. How!

Tea. Arah, how?

Mid. None, my lord, can tell better than I, who brought you both into the world.—My deceased lord, upon the sight of your deformity, engaged me, by a considerable reward, to say you were the last born, that the beautiful twin, likely to be the greater ornament to the family, might succeed him in his honour. This secret my conscience has long struggled with. Upon the news that you were left heir to the estate, I thought justice was satisfied, and I was resolved to keep it a secret still; but by strange chance, over-hearing what passed just now, my poor conscience was racked, and I was forced to declare the truth.

Y. W. By all my former hopes I could have sworn it: I found the spirit of eldership in my blood; my pulses beat, and swelled for seniority. Mr. Hermes Wou'dbe, I'm your most humble servant. [*Foppishly.*]

E. W. Hermes is my name, my christian name; of which I am prouder than of all titles that honour gives, or flattery bestows. But thou, vain bubble, "puft up with the empty breath of that more empty woman;" to let thee see how I despise thy pride, I'll call thee lord, dress thee up in titles like a king at arms; "you shall be blazoned round, like any church in Holland; thy pageantry shall exceed the

" Lord Mayor's ;" and yet this Heimes, plain Her-
mes shall despise thee.

Sub. Well, well, this is nothing to the purpose.—
Mistress, will you make an affidavit of what you have
said, before a master in Chancery ?

Mid. That I can, though I were to die the next
minute after it.

Tea. Den, dear joy, you would be damn'd the next
minute after dat.

E. W. All this is trifling : I must purge my house
of this nest of villany at once. Here, Teague [*Whis-
pers* Teague.] go, make haste.

Tea. Dat I can.

[*As he runs out, Young Wou'dbe stops him.*]

Y. W. Where are you going, sir ?

Tea. Only for a pot of ale, dear joy, for you and
my maishter, to drink friends.

Y. W. You lie, sirrah. [*Pushes him back.*]

Tea. Fet, I do so.

E. W. What, violence to my servant ! Nay, then
I'll force him a passage.

Sub. An assault, an assault upon the body of a peer.
Within there !

*Enter three or four Constables, one of them with a black
patch on his eye. They disarm Elder Wou'dbe, and
secure Teague.*

E. W. This plot was laid for my reception. Un-
hand me, constable.

Y. W. Have a care, Mr. Constable, the man is mad ;

he's possessed with an odd phrenzy, that he's my brother, and my elder too; so, because I would not very willingly resign my house and estate, he attempted to murder me.

Sub. Gentlemen, take care of that fellow: he made an assault upon my body, *vi & armis*.

Tea. Arah, fat ish dat wy at armish?

Sub. No matter, sirrah, I shall have you hanged.

Tea. Hang'd! dat is nothing, dear joy—we are us'd to 't.

E. W. Unhand me, villain, or by all——

Tea. Have a care, dear maishter, do n't swear;—we shall be in the Crown-Offish. You know dere ish sharpers about us. [*Looking about on them that bold him.*]

Y. W. Mr. Constable, you know your directions; away with 'em.

E. W. Hold——

Const. No, no, force him away.

[*They all hurry him off; manent Y. W. and Mid.*]

Y. W. Now, my dear prophetess, my sybil; by all my dear desires and ambitions, I do believe you have spoken the truth—I am the elder.

Mid. No, no, sir, the devil a word on't is true——I would not wrong my conscience, neither: for, faith and troth, as I am an honest woman, you were born above three-quarters of an hour after him—But I do n't much care if I do swear that you are the eldest. What a blessing it was that I was in the closet at that pinch! Had I not come out that moment, you would have sneaked off; your brother had been in posses-

sion, and then we had lost all : but now you are established : possession gets you money, that gets you law, and law, you know—Down on your knees, sirrah, and ask my blessing.

Y. W. No, my dear mother, I'll give thee a blessing, a rent-charge of five hundred pounds a year, upon what part of the estate you will, during your life.

Mid. Thank you, my lord : that five hundred a year will afford me " a leisurely life, and " a handsome retirement in the country, " where I mean to repent " me of my sins, and die a good Christian ; for, heaven knows, I am old, and ought to bethink me of " another life." Have you none of the cordial left that we had in the morning ?

Y. W. Yes, yes, we'll go to the fountain head.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Street. Enter TEAGUE.

Tea. Deel tauke me but dish ish a most shweet business indeed ; maishters play the fool, and shervants must shuffer for it. I am prishoner in the constable's house, by my shoul, and shent abroad to fetch some bail for my maishter ; but who shall bail poor Teague, agra ?

Enter CONSTANCE.

Oh, dere ish my maishter's old love. Indeed, I fear dish business will spoil his fortune.

Con. Who 's here? Teague! [*He turns from her.*]

Tea. Deel tauke her, I did tought she cou'd not know me agen, now I am a prishoner. [*Constance goes about to look him in the face. He turns from her.*] Dish ish not shivil, by my shoul, to 'know a shentleman fether he will or no.

Con. Why this, Teague? What 's the matter?—Are you asham'd of me or yourself, Teague?

Tea. Of bote, by my shoul.

Con. How does your master, sir?

Tea. Very well, dear joy, and in prishon.

Con. In prison! how? where?

Tea. Why, in the little Bashtile yonder, at the end of the street.

Con. Shew me the way immediately.

Tea. Fet, I can shew you the house yonder! shee yonder! by my shoul, I shew his face yonder, peeping through the iron glass window.

Con. I'll see him, though a dungeon were his confinement.

[*Runs out.*]

Tea. Ah! auld kindness, by my shoul, cannot be forgotten. Now, if my maishter had but grashe enough to get her with child, her word would go for two; and she wou'd bail him and I bote. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

A Room miserably furnished, Elder WOU'DBE sitting and writing.

*E. W. The Tow'r confines the great,
The spunging-house the poor;
Thus there are degrees of state
That ev'n the wretched must endure.*

*Virgil, tho' cherished in courts,
Relates but a splenetic tale,
Servantes revels and sports,
Altho' he writ in a gaol.*

Then hang reflexions, [*Starts up.*] I'll go write a comedy. Ho, within there: tell the lieutenant of the tower that I would speak with him.

Enter Constable.

Const. Ay, ay, the man is mad: lieutenant of the tower! ha, ha, ha! would you could make your words good, master.

E. W. Why, am not I a prisoner here? I know it by the stately apartments. What is that, pray, that hangs streaming down upon the wall yonder?

Const. Yonder! 't is cobweb, sir.

E. W. 'T is false, sir: 't is as fine tapestry as any in Europe.

Const. The devil it is!

E. W. Then your damask bed, here ; the flowers are so bold, I took them for embroidery ; and then the head-work, *point de Venise*, I protest !

Const. As good Kidderminster as any in England, I must confess ; and though the sheets be a little soiled, yet I can assure you, sir, that many an honest gentleman has lain in them.

E. W. Pray, sir, what did those two Indian pieces cost, that are fixed up in the corner of the room ?

Const. Indian pieces ! What the devil, sir, they are my old jack-boots, my militia boots.

E. W. I took them for two china jars, upon my word. But hark'e, friend, art thou content that these things should be as they are ?

Const. Content ! ay, sir.

E. W. Why then should I complain ?

[One calls within.]

Within. Mr. Constable, here's a woman will force her way upon us : we can't stop her.

Const. Knock her down, then, knock her down ; let no woman come up, the man's mad enough already.

Enter CONSTANCE.

Con. Who dares oppose me ?

[Throws him a handful of money.]

Const. Not I truly, madam. [Gathering up the money.]

E. W. My Constance ! my guardian angel here !——
Then nought can hurt me.

Const. Hark'e, sir, you may suppose the bed to be a damask bed for half an hour, if you please.

Con. No, no, sir, your prisoner must along with me.

Const. Ay! faith, the woman's madder than the man.

Enter TRUEMAN and TEAGUE.

E. W. Ha! Trueman too! I'm proud to think that many a prince has not so many true friends in his palace, as I have here in prison—two such—

Tea. Tree, by my shoul.

True. My lord, just as I heard of your confinement, I was going to make myself a prisoner. Behold the fetters; I have just bought the wedding-ring.

Con. I hope they are golden fetters, captain.

True. They weigh four thousand pound, madam, besides the purse, which is worth a million. My lord, this very evening was I to be married: but the news of your misfortune has stopt me: I would not gather roses in a wet hour.

E. W. Come, the weather shall be clear; the thoughts of your good fortune will make me easy, more than my own can do, if purchased by your disappointment.

True. Do you think, my lord, that I can go to the bed of pleasure whilst you lie in a hovel? Here, where is this constable? How dare you do this, insolent rascal?

Const. Insolent rascal! do you know who you speak to, sir?

True. Yes, sirrah; do'nt I call you by your proper name? How dare you confine a peer of the realm?

Const. Peer of the realm! you may give good words though, I hope.

E. W. Ay, ay, Mr. Constable is in the right, he did but his duty; I suppose he had twenty guineas for his pains.

Const. No, I had but ten.

E. W. Hark'e, Trueman, this fellow must be soothed, he'll be of use to us; I must employ you too in this affair of my brother.

True. Say no more, my lord, I'll cut his throat, 't is but flying the kingdom.

E. W. No, no, 't will be more revenge to worst him at his own weapons. Could I but force him out of his garrison, that I might get into possession, his claim would vanish immediately. Does my brother know you?

True. Very little, if at all.

E. W. Hark 'e.

[*Whispers.*

True. It shall be done. Look 'e, constable, you're drawn into a wrong cause, and it may prove your destruction, if you don't change sides immediately. We desire no favour but the use of your coat, wig, and staff for half an hour.

Const. Why, truly, sir, I understand now, by this gentlewoman, that I know to be our neighbour, that he is a lord, and I heartily beg his worship's pardon, and if I can do your honour any service your grace may command me.

E. W. I'll reward you. But you must have the black patch for the eye too.

"Tea. I can give your lordship van; here fet, 't is
"a plaishter for a sore finger, and I have worn it but
"twice."

Con. But pray, captain, what was your quarrel at Aurelia to-day.

True. With your permission, madam, we'll mind my lord's business at present; when that's done, we'll mind the lady's. My lord, I shall make an excellent constable; I never had the honour of a civil employment before: we'll equip ourselves in another place. Here, you prince of darkness, have you never a better room in your house, these iron grates frighten the lady.

Const. I have a handsome, neat parlour below, sir.

True. Come along then, you must conduct us.—
We don't intend to be out of your sight—that you may not be out of ours. [*Aside.*] [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Changes to an Apartment. Enter AURELIA in a passion, RICHMORE following.

Aur. Follow me not; age and deformity, with quiet, were preferable to this vexatious persecution; for Heaven's sake, Mr. Richmore, what have I ever shewn to vindicate this presumption of yours?

Rich. You shew it now, madam, your face, your wit, your shape, are all temptations to undergo even the rigour of your disdain, for the bewitching pleasure of your company.

Aur. Then be assured, sir, you shall reap no other benefit from my company; and if you think it a pleasure to be constantly slighted, ridiculed, and affronted,

you shall have admittance to such entertainment whenever you will.

Rich. I take you at your word, madam; I am armed with submission against all the attacks of your severity, and your ladyship shall find, that my resignation can bear much longer than your rigour can inflict.

Aur. That is, in plain terms, your sufficiency will presume much longer than my honour can resist. Sir, you might have spared the unmannerly declaration to my face, having already taken care to let me know your opinion of my virtue, by your impudent settlement proposed by Mrs. Midnight.

Rich. By those fair eyes, I'll double the proposal; this soft, this white, this powerful hand [*Takes her hand.*] shall write its own conditions.

Aur. Then it shall write this—[*Strikes him.*—]—and if you like the terms, you shall have more another time.

[*Exit.*]

Rich. Death and madness! a blow—Twenty thousand pound sterling for one night's revenge upon her dear, proud, disdainful person! “Am I rich as many
“a sovereign prince, wallow in wealth, yet can't command my pleasure? Woman! if there be power in
“gold, I yet shall triumph o'er thy pride.”

Enter MIDNIGHT.

Mid. O' my troth, and so you shall, if I can help it.

Rich. Madam, madam, here, here, here's money, gold, silver, take, take all, all, my rings too; all shall be yours, make me but happy in this presumptuous

beauty, I'll make thee rich as avarice can crave; if not, I'll murder thee and myself too.

Mid. Your bounty is too large, too large indeed, sir.

Rich. Too large! no, 't is beggary without her—
Lordships, manors, acres, rents, tithes and trees, all,
all shall fly for my dear sweet revenge.

Mid. Say no more, this night I'll put you in a way.

Rich. This night?

Mid. The lady's aunt is very near her time—she
goes abroad this evening a visiting; in the mean time
I'll send to your mistress, that her aunt is fallen in
labour at my house: she comes in a hurry, and then—

Rich. Shall I be there to meet her?

Mid. Perhaps.

Rich. In a private room?

Mid. Mum.

Rich. No creature to disturb us?

Mid. Mum, I say, but you must give me your word
not to ravish her; “nay, I can tell you she won't be
“ravished.

“*Rich.* Ravish! Let me see, I'm worth five thousand
“pounds a year, twenty thousand guineas in my
“pocket, and may not I force a toy that's scarce worth
“fifteen hundred pounds? I'll do it.

“*Her beauty sets my heart on fire, beside*

“*Th' injurious blow has set on fire my pride;*

“*The bare fruition were not worth my pain,*

“*The joy will be to humble her disdain;*

“*Beyond enjoyment will the transport last*

“*In triumph, when the extasy is past.*” [Exeunt.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Lord Wou'dbe's House. Enter Young WOU'DBE.

Young Wou'd'be.

SHEW me that proud Stoic that can bear success and champaign; philosophy can support us in hard fortune, but who can have patience in prosperity?—The learned may talk what they will of human bodies, but I am sure there is not one atom in mine but what is truly Epicurean. My brother is secured, I guarded with my friends, my lewd and honest midnight friends. Holla: who waits there?

Enter Servant.

Ser. My lord.

Y. W. A fresh battalion of bottles to re-inforce the cistern. Are the ladies come?

Ser. Half an hour ago, my lord: they're below in the bathing chamber.

"*Y. W.* Where did you light on 'em?

"*Ser.* One in the passage at the old play-house, my lord—I found another very melancholy paring her nails by Rosamond's Pond—and a couple I got at the Chequer alehouse in Holborn; the two last came to town yesterday in a West-country waggon."

Y. W. Very well; order Baconface to hasten supper—and, d'ye hear, bid the Swiss admit no stranger

without acquainting me. [*Exit Servant.*] Now, Fortune, I defy thee, this night's my own at least.

Re-enter Servant.

Ser. My lord, here's the constable below with the black eye, and he wants to speak with your lordship in all haste.

Y. W. Ha! the constable! Should fortune jilt me now?—Bid him come up—I fear some cursed chance to thwart me.

Enter TRUEMAN in the Constable's clothes.

True. Ah! my lord here is sad news——your brother is——

Y. W. Got way, made his escape, I warrant you,

True. Worse, worse, my lord.

Y. W. Worse, worse! What can be worse?

True. I dare not speak it.

Y. W. Death and hell, fellow, don't distract me,

True. He's dead.

Y. W. Dead!

True. Positively.

Y. W. *Coup de grace, ciel gramercy.*

True. Villain, I understand you. [*Aside.*]

Y. W. But how, how, Mr. Constable?—Speak it aloud, kill me with the relation.

True. I don't know how, the poor gentleman was very melancholy upon his confinement, and so he desired me to send for a gentlewoman that lives hard by here, may hap your worship may know her.

Y. W. At the gilt balcony in the square?

True. The very same, a smart woman truly. I went for her myself, but she was otherways engaged; not she truly, she would not come. Would you believe it, my lord, at the hearing of this the poor man was like to drop down dead.

Y. W. Then he was but likely to drop down dead?

True. Would it were no more. Then I left him, and coming about two hours after, I found him hanged in his sword-belt.

Y. W. Hanged!

True. Dangling.

Y. W. *Le coup d'eclat!* Done like the noblest Roman of them all. But are you sure he's past all recovery? Did you send for no surgeon to bleed him?

True. No, my lord, I forgot that—but I'll send immediately.

Y. W. No, no, Mr. Constable, 'tis too late now, too late.—And the lady would not come you say?

True. Not a step would she stir.

Y. W. Inhuman! barbarous!—dear, delicious woman, thou art now mine. Where is the body, Mr. Constable? I must see it.

True. By all means, my lord, it lies in my parlour; there's a power of company come in, and among the rest one—one—one Trueman, I think they call him, a devilish hot fellow, he had like to have pulled the house down about our ears, and swears—I told him he should pay for swearing—he gave me a slap in the

face, said he was in the army, and had a commission for 't.

Y. W. Captain Trueman! A blustering kind of a rake-helly officer.

True. Ay, my lord, one of those scoundrels that we pay wages to for being knocked o' th' head for us.

Y. W. Ay, ay, one of those fools that have only brains to be knocked out.

True. Son of a whore! [*Aside.*] He 's a plaguy impudent fellow, my lord; he swore that you were the greatest villain upon the earth.

Y. W. Ay, ay, but he durst not say that to my face, Mr. Constable.

True. No, no, hang him, he said it behind your back to be sure—and he swore, moreover—Have a care, my lord—he swore that he would cut your throat whenever he met you.

Y. W. Will you swear that you heard him say so?

True. Heard him! ay, as plainly as you hear me: He spoke the very words that I speak to your lordship.

Y. W. Well, well, I'll manage him. But now I think on 't I wont go to see the body; it will but increase my grief. Mr. Constable, do you send for the coroner; they must find him *non compos*. He was mad before, you know. Here—something for your trouble.

[*Gives money.*]

True. Thank your honour. But pray, my lord, have a care of that Trueman; he swears that he will cut your throat, and he will do 't, my lord, he 'll do 't.

Y. W. Never fear, never fear.

True. But he swore it, my lord, and he will certainly do't. Pray have a care. [*Exit.*]

Y. W. Well, well——so——the devil's in't if I be n't the eldest now. What a pack of civil relations have I had here! My father takes a fit of the apoplexy, makes a face, and goes off one way; my brother takes a fit of the spleen, makes a face and goes off t'other way. Well, I must own he has found the way to mollify me, and I do love him now with all my heart; since he was so very civil to juggle into the world before me. But now my joys! Without there—hollo—take off the inquisition of the gate; the heir may now enter unsuspected.

*The wolf is dead, the shepherds may go play;
Ease follows care, so rolls the world away.*

'Tis a question whether adversity or prosperity makes the most poets.

Enter Servant.

Ser. My lord, a footman brought this letter, and waits for an answer.

Y. W. Nothing from the Elysian fields, I hope, [*Opening the letter.*] What do I see, Constance! Spells and magic in every letter of the name—Now for the sweet contents.

' My Lord,

' I am pleased to hear of your happy change of fortune, and shall be glad to see your lordship this evening to wish you joy.

CONSTANCE.

Now the devil's in this Midnight; she told me this afternoon that the wind was chopping about, and has it got into the warm corner already? Here, my coach and six to the door: I'll visit my sultana in state.—As for the seraglio below stairs you, my bashaws, may possess them. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

The Street. Enter TEAGUE with a lanthorn, TRUE-MAN in the Constable's habit following.

True. Blockhead, thou hast led us out of the way; we have certainly passed the Constable's house.

Tea. By my shoul, dear joy, I am never out of my ways; for poor Teague has been a wanderer ever since he was born.

True. Hold up the lanthorn: what sign is that? The St. Alban's Tavern! Why, you blundering fool, you have led me directly to St. James's square, when you should have gone towards Soho. [*Shrieking within.*] Hark! what noise is that over the way? a woman's cry!

Tea. Fet it ish——shome damsel in distress I believe, that has no mind to be relieved.

True. I'll use the privilege of my office to know what the matter is.

Tea. Hold, hold, maishter captain, by my fet, dat ish not the way home.

Within. Help, help, murder! Help.

True. Ha! Here must be mischief. Within there, open the door in the king's name, or I force it open. Here, Teague, break open the door.

[Teague takes the staff and thumps at the door.]

Tea. Deel take him, I have knocked so long as I am able. Arrah, maishter, get a great long ladder to get in at the window of the firsh room, and so open the door, and let in yourshelf.

Within. Help, help, help!

True. Knock harder, let's raise the mob.

Tea. O, maishter, I have think just now of a brave invention to make them come out; and by St. Patrick, dat very bushiness did make my nown shelf and my fader run like the devil out of my nown hoose in my country——by my shoule, set the hoose afire.

Enter the Mob.

Mob. What's the matter, master Constable?

True. Gentlemen, I command your assistance in the king's name, to break into the house: there is murder cried within.

Mob. Ay, ay, break open the door.

[Midnight at the balcony.]

Mid. What noise is that below?

Tea. Arrah, what noise ish dat above?

Mid. Only a poor gentlewoman in labour: 't will be over presently. Here, Mr. Constable there's something for you to drink.

[Throws down a purse and Teague takes it up.]

Tea. Come, maishter, we have no more to shay, by my shoule. [*Going.*] Arrah, if you will play the constable right now, fet you will come away.

True. No, no; there must be villany by this bribe. Who lives in this house?

Mob. A midwife, a midwife: 't is none of our business: let us begone. [*Aurelia at the window.*]

Aur. Gentlemen, dear gentlemen, help! a rape, a rape, villany.

True. Ha! that voice I know: Give me the staff, I'll make a breach, I warrant you:

[*Breaks open the door, and all go in.*]

SCENE III.

Changes to the inside of the House. Re-enter TRUEMAN, and Mob.

True. Gentlemen, search all about the house; let not a soul escape.

Enter AURELIA running, with her hair about her ears, and out of breath.

Aur. Dear Mr. Constable——had you——staid but a moment longer, I had been ruined.

True. Aurelia!—Are you safe, madam?

Aur. Yes, yes, I am safe—"I think"—but with enough to do: "he's a devilish strong fellow."

True. Where is the villain that attempted it?

Aur. Pshaw, never mind the villain; look out the

woman of the house, the devil, the monster, that decoyed me hither.

Enter TEAGUE, pulling in MIDNIGHT by the hair.

Tea. By my shoule, I have taken my share of the plunder. Let me see fat I have gotten—*[Takes her to the light.]* Ububboo, a witch, a witch! the very saam witch dat would swaar my maishter was the youngest.

True. How! Midnight! This was the luckiest disguise—Come, my dear Proserpine, I'll take care of you.

Mid. Pray, sir, let me speak to you.

True. No, no; I'll talk with you before a magistrate. A cart, Bridewell; you understand me.—Teague, let her be your prisoner, I'll wait on this lady.

Aur. Mr. Constable, I'll reward you.

Tea. It ish convenient noo, by the law of armsh, that I search my prisoner, for fear she may have some pocket-pistols: dere is a joke for you.

[Searches her pockets.]

Mid. Ah, do n't use an old woman so barbarously.

Tea. Dear joy, den fy vere you an old woman?—Dat is your falt, not mine, joy! Uboo, here ish nothing but scribble scrabble papers, I think.

[Pulls out a handful of letters.]

True. Let me see them; they may be of use. *[Looks over the letters.]* 'For Mr. Richmore'—Ah! does he traffic hereabouts?

Aur. That is the villain that would have abused me.

True. Ha! then he has abused you; villain indeed? Was his name Richmore, mistress? a lusty, handsome man?

Aur. Ay, ay, the very same: a "lusty," ugly fellow.

True. Let me see—whose scrawl is this? [*Opens the letter.*] Death and confusion "to my sight;" Clelia! my bride!—His whore.—I've past a precipice unseen, which to look back upon shivers me with terror.—This night, this very moment, had not my friend been in confinement, had I not worn this dress, had not Aurelia been in danger, had not Teague found this letter, had the least minutest circumstance been omitted, what a monster had I been! Mistress, is this same Richmore in the house still, think 'e?

Aur. 'Tis very probable he may.

True. Very well.—Teague, take these ladies over to the tavern, and stay there till I come to you. Madam, [*To Aurelia.*] fear no injury, your friends are near you.

Aur. What does he mean?

Tea. Come, dear joy, I vil give you a pot of wine, out of your own briberies here. [*Hales out Midnight.*

[*Excunt Aurelia and Mob.*

Enter RICHMORE.

Rich. Since my money won't prevail on this cross fellow, I'll try what my authority can do—What's the meaning of this riot, Constable? I have the commission of the peace, and can command you. Go

about your business, and leave your prisoners with me.

True. No, sir; the prisoners shall go about their business, and I'll be left with you. Look 'e, master, we do n't use to make up these matters before company; so you and I must be in private a little. You say, sir, that you are a justice of peace.

Rich. Yes, sir; "I have my commission in my pocket."

True. I believe it. Now, sir, one good turn deserves another; and if you will promise to do me a kindness, why you shall have as good as you bring.

Rich. What is it?

True. You must know, sir, there is a neighbour's daughter that I had a woundy kindness for: she had a very good repute all over the parish, and might have married very handsomely, that I must say; but I do n't know how, we came together after a very kindly natural manner, and I swore, that I must say, I did swear confoundedly, that I would marry her: but I do n't know how, I never cared for marrying of her since.

Rich. How so?

True. Why, because I did my business without it: that was the best way, I thought. The truth is, she has some foolish reasons to say she's with child, and threatens mainly to have me taken up with a warrant, and brought before a justice of peace. Now, sir, I intend to come before you, and I hope your worship will bring me off.

Rich. Look 'e, sir, if the woman prove with child, and you swore to marry her, you must do 't.

True. Ay, master; but I 'm for liberty and property. I vote for parliament-men: I pay taxes, and truly I do n't think matrimony consistent with the liberty of the subject.

Rich. But in this case, sir, both law and justice will oblige you.

True. Why, if it be the law of the land—I found a letter here—I think it is for your worship.

Rich. Ay, sir, how came you by it?

True. By a very strange accident, truly—Clelia—she says here you swore to marry her. Eh!—Now, sir, I suppose, that what is law for a petty constable, may be law for a justice of peace.

Rich. This is the oddest fellow——

True. Here was the other lady that cried out so—I warrant now, if I were brought before you for ravishing a woman—the gallows would ravish me for 't.

Rich. But I did not ravish her.

True. That I 'm glad to hear: I wanted to be sure of that.

[*Aside.*

Rich. I do n't like this fellow. Come, sir, give me my letter, and go about your business; I have no more to say to you.

True. But I have something to say to you.

[*Coming up to him.*

Rich. What?

True. Dog.

[*Strikes him.*

Rich. Hal! struck by a peasant! [*Draws.*] Slave, thy death is certain.

[*Runs at Trueman.*

True. O, brave Don John! rape and murder in one night. *[Disarms him.]*

Rich. Rascal, return my sword, and acquit your prisoners, else will I prosecute thee to beggary. I'll give some petty-fogger a thousand pounds to starve thee and thy family according to law.

True. I'll lay you a thousand pound you won't.

[Discovering himself.]

Rich. Ghosts and apparitions! Trueman!

True. Words are needless to upbraid you; my very looks are sufficient: and if you have the least sense of shame, this sword would be less painful in your heart, than my appearance is in your eye.

Rich. Truth, by heavens.

True. Think on the contents of this; *[Shewing a letter.]* think next on me; reflect upon your villany to Aurelia, then view thyself.

Rich. Trueman, canst thou forgive me?

True. Forgive thee! *[A long pause.]* Do one thing, and I will.

Rich. Any thing—I'll beg thy pardon.

True. The blow excuses that.

Rich. I'll give thee half my estate.

True. Mercenary.

Rich. I'll make thee my sole heir.

True. I despise it.

Rich. What shall I do?

True. You shall—marry Clelia.

Rich. How! that's too hard.

True. Too hard! why was it then imposed on me?

If you marry her yourself, I shall believe you intended me no injury : so your behaviour will be justified, my resentment appeased, and the lady's honour repaired.

Rich. 'T is infamous.

True. No, by heaven, 't is justice, and what is just is honourable : if promises from man to man have force, why not from man to woman ? Their very weakness is the charter of their power, and they should not be injured, because they can't return it.

Rich. Return my sword.

True. In my hand 't is the sword of justice, and I should not part with it.

Rich. Then sheath it here, I'll die before I consent so basely.

True. Consider, sir, the sword is worn for a distinguishing mark of honour——Promise me one, and receive the other.

Rich. I'll promise nothing till I have that in my power.

True. Take it. [*Throws him his sword.*]

Rich. I scorn to be compelled even to justice : and now that I may resist, I yield. *True*, I have injured thee, and *Clelia* I have severely wronged.

True. Wronged indeed, sir——and to aggravate the crime, the fair afflicted loves you. Marked you with what confusion she received me ? She wept, the injured innocence wept, and with a strange reluctance gave consent ; her moving softness pierced my heart, though I mistook the cause.

Rich. Your youthful virtue warms my breast, and melts it into tenderness.

True. Indulge it, sir ; justice is noble in any form ; think of the joys and raptures will possess her, when she finds you instead of me ; you, the dear dissembler, the man she loves, the man she gave for lost, to find him true, returned, and in her arms.

Rich. No new possession can give equal joy.—It shall be done, the priest that waits for you shall tie the knot this moment ; in the morning I'll expect you'll give me joy. *[Exit.*

True. So, is not this better now than cutting of throats ? I have got my revenge, and the lady will have her's without bloodshed. *[Exit.*

SCENE III.

Changes to an Apartment. Enter CONSTANCE " and " Servant.

" Ser. He's just a coming up, madam."

Con. My civility to this man will be as great a constraint upon me, as rudeness would be to his brother ; but I must bear it a little, because our designs require it.

Enter Young Wou'DBE.

His appearance shocks me. My lord, I wish you joy.

Y. W. Madam, 't is only in your power to give it ; and would you honour me with a title to be really proud of, it should be that of your humblest servant.

Con. I never admitted any body to the title of an humble servant, that I did not intend should command me; if your lordship will bear with the slavery, you shall begin when you please; provided you take upon you the authority when I have a mind.

“ *Y. W.* Our sex, madam, make much better lovers than husbands; and I think it highly unreasonable; that you should put yourself in my power, when you can so absolutely keep me in yours.

“ *Con.* No, my lord, we never truly command till we have given our promise to obey; and we are never in more danger of being made slaves, than when we have them at our feet.

“ *Y. W.* True, madam, the greatest empires are in most danger of falling; but it is better to be absolute there, than to act by a prerogative that is confined.

“ *Con.* Well, well, my lord, I like the constitution we live under; I'm for a limited power, or none at all.”

Y. W. “ You have so much the heart of the subject, madam, that you may rule as you please; but you have weak pretences to a limited sway, where your eyes have already played the tyrant.”——I think one privilege of the people is to kiss their sovereign's hand.

[*Taking her hand.*]

Con. Not till they have taken the oaths, my lord; and he that refuses them in the form the law prescribes, is, I think, no better than a rebel.”

Y. W. By shrines and altars, [*Kneeling.*] by all

that you think just, and I hold good, by this, [*Taking her hand.*] the fairest, and the dearest vow.

[*Kissing her hand.*]

Con. Fie, my lord.

[*Seemingly yielding.*]

Y. W. Your eyes are mine, they bring me tidings from your heart, that this night I shall be happy.

Con. Would not you despise a conquest so easily gained?

Y. W. Yours will be the conquest, and I shall despise all the world but you.

Con. But will you promise to make no attempts upon my honour?

Y. W. That's foolish. [*Aside.*] Not angels sent on messages to earth, shall visit with more innocence.

Con. Ay, ay, to be sure. [*Aside.*] My lord, I'll send one to conduct you. [Exit.]

Y. W. Ha, ha, ha!—no attempts upon her honour! When I can find the place where it lies, I'll tell her more of my mind. Now do I feel ten thousand Cupids tickling me all over with the points of their arrows. Where's my deformity now? I have read somewhere these lines:

*Though nature cast me in a rugged mould,
Since fate has chang'd the bullion into gold;
Cupid returns, breaks all his shajis of lead,
And tips each arrow with a golden bead.
Feather'd with tulle, the gay lordly dart
Flies proudly on, whilst every virgin's heart,
Swells with ambition to receive the smart.*

Enter Elder WOU'DBE behind him.

E. W. *Thus to adorn dramatic story,
Stage heroes struts in borrow'd glory,
Proud and august as ever man saw,
And ends his empire in a stanza.*

[Slaps him on the shoulder.

Y. W. *Ha! my brother!*

E. W. No, perfidious man; all kindred and relation I disown: the poor attempts upon my fortune I could pardon, but the base designs upon my love, I can never forgive—my honour, birthright, riches, all I could more freely spare, than the least thought of thy prevailing here.

Y. W. How! my hopes deceived? Cursed be the fair delusions of her sex!—Whilst only man opposed my cunning, I stood secure; but as soon as woman interposed, luck changed hands, and the devil was immediately on her side. Well, sir, much good may do you with your mistress, and may you love and live, and starve together. *[Going.*

E. W. Hold, sir, I was lately your prisoner, now you are mine; when the ejectment is executed, you shall be at liberty.

Y. W. Ejectment!

E. W. Yes, sir: by this time, I hope, my friends have purged my father's house of that debauched and riotous swarm that you had hived together.

Y. W. Confusion! sir, let me pass; I am the elder, and will be obeyed. *[Drawing.*

E. W. Darest thou dispute the eldership so nobly.

Y. W. I dare, and will, to the last drop of my inveterate blood. *[They fight]*

Enter TRUEMAN and TEAGUE. Trueman strikes down their swords.

True. Hold, hold! my lord, I have brought those shall soon decide the controversy.

Y. W. If I mistake not, this is the villain that decoyed me abroad.

[Runs at Trueman, Teague catches his arm behind, and takes away his sword.]

Tea. Ay, by my shoule, thish ish the best guard upon the rules of fighting, to catch a man behind his back.

True. My lord, a word. *[Whispers E. W.]* Now gentlemen, please to hear this venerable lady.

[Goes to the door and brings in Midnight.]

E. W. Midnight in custody!

Tea. In my custody, fet.

ru e. Now, madam, you know what punishment is destined for the injury offered to Aurelia, if you don't immediately confess the truth.

Mid. Then I must own (Heaven forgive me) *[Weeps.]* I must own that Hermes, as he was still esteemed, so he is the first-born.

Tea. A very honest woman, by my shoule.

Y. W. That confession is extorted by fear, and therefore of no force.

True. Ay, sir, but here is your letter to her, with the ink scarce dry, where you repeat your offer of five hundred pounds a year to swear in your behalf.

Tea. Dat was Teague's finding out, and I believe St. Patrick put it in my thoughts to pick her pockets.

Enter CONSTANCE and AURELIA.

Con. I hope, Mr. Wou'dbe, you will make no attempts upon my person.

Y. W. Damn your person.

E. W. But pray, madam, where have you been all this evening. [To Aurelia.]

Aur. Very busy, I can assure you, sir. Here's an honest constable that I could find in my heart to marry, had the greasy rogue but one drop of genteel blood in his veins; "what's become of him?" [Looking about.]

Con. Bless me, cousin, marry a constable!

Aur. Why, truly, madam, if that constable had not come in a very critical minute, by this time I had been glad to marry any body.

True. I take you at your word, madam, you shall marry him this moment; and if you do n't say that I have genteel blood in my veins by to-morrow morning—

Aur. And was it you, sir;

True. Look'e, madam, do n't be ashamed; I found you a little in the *disbabile*, that's the truth on't, but you made a brave defence.

Aur. I am obliged to you; and though you were a little whimsical to-day, this late adventure has taught me how dangerous it is to provoke a gentleman by ill usage; therefore, if my lord and this lady will shew us a good example, I think we must follow our leaders, captain.

Con. My lord, there was taken among your brother's jovial crew, his friend Subtleman, whom we have taken care to secure.

E. W. For him the pillory ; for you, madam——

[To Midnight.

Tea. By my shoule, she shall be married to maishter Fuller.

E. W. For you, brother——

Y. W. Poverty and contempt——

To which I yield as to a milder fate,

Than obligations from the man I hate. [Exit.

E. W. Then take thy wish——And now, I hope, all parties have received their due rewards and punishments.

Tea. But what will you do for poor Teague, maish-ter ?

E. W. What shall I do for thee ?

Tea. Arah, make me a justice of peash, dear joy.

E. W. Justice of peace ! thou art not qualified, man.

Tea. Yes, fet am I—I can take the oats, and write my mark—I can be an honest man myself, and keep a great rogue for my clerk.

E. W. Well, well, you shall be taken care of.——
And now, captain, we set out for happiness——

Let none despair, whate'er their fortunes be,

Fortune must yield, would men but act like me.

Choose a brave friend as partner of your breast,

Be active when your right is in contest ;

Be true to love, and fate will do the rest.

[Exeunt Omnes.



EPILOGUE.

OUR poet open'd with a loud warlike blast,
But now weak woman is his safest cast,
To bring him off with quarter at the last:
Not that he's vain to think, that I can say,
Or he can write fine things to help the play.
The various scenes have drain'd his strength and art;
And I, you know, had a hard struggling part:
But then he brought me off with life and limb;
Ah! would that I could do as much for him——
Stay, let me think—your favours to excite,
I still must act the part I play'd to-night.
For whatsoever may be your sly pretence,
You like those best that make the best defence:
But this is needless——'T is in vain to crave it,
If you have damn'd the play, no power can save it;
Not all the wits of Athens, and of Rome;
Not Shakspeare, Johnson, could revoke its doom:
Nay, what is more——if once your anger rouses,
Not all the courted beauties of both houses.
He would have ended here—but I thought meet,
To tell him there was left one safe retreat,
Protection sacred at the ladies feet.
To that he answer'd, in submissive strain,
He paid all homage to this female reign,
And therefore turn'd his satyr 'gainst the men.
From your great queen, this sovereign right ye draw,
To keep the wits, as she the world, in awe.
To her bright sceptre, your bright eyes they bow;
Such awful splendor sits on every brow,
All scandal on the sex were treason now.
The play can tell with what poetic care,
He labour'd to redress the injur'd fair,
And if you won't protect, the man will damn him there.
Then save the muse that flies to you for aid;
Perhaps my poor request may some persuade,
Because it is the first I ever made.

